

Clinton adviser to be named co-conspirator

WASHINGTON (AP) — Bruce Lindsey, President Bill Clinton's chief of staff, will be named by prosecutors as an indicted co-conspirator in the Whitewater trial that began this week, a defence lawyer confirmed Wednesday. Attorney Dan Guthrie, who represents one of two Arkansas bankers on trial, said he was told by Whitewater prosecutors that Mr. Lindsey would be identified in court as conspiring to hide large cash withdrawals by Mr. Clinton's 1990 campaign for Arkansas governor. "We have been informed by independent counsel that Bruce Lindsey is an indicted co-conspirator in this case with regard to count two of the indictment," Mr. Guthrie told the Associated Press. Bankers Herbie Branscum and Robert M. Hill are accused of misapplying \$13.217 in funds from their Perry County bank to reimburse political contributions made to Mr. Clinton's run for governor and other races. They also are accused of conspiring to hide from tax authorities tens of thousands of dollars in withdrawals by Mr. Clinton's campaign. Mr.

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جوردان تايمز يومية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الراي

Italy crash out of Euro 96

MANCHESTER (AFP) — Italy crashed out of Euro 96 after failing to break down a German side reduced to 10 men after 60 minutes of a pulsating and controversial 0-0 draw on Wednesday. The Germans go through with the Czech Republic who scored a late equaliser in a 3-3 draw with Russia that finally consigned the Italians to an early exit. It was a sad end for Arrigo Sacchi's side whose fans suffered a rollercoaster ride of emotions on a dramatic night in which the complex mathematics changed almost by the minute. In the end, though, the Italians paid for their inability to breach a resolute defence who somehow managed to repel everything the desperate Italians managed to throw at them — including a penalty kick.

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Kuwait intercepts Iraq-bound ships

KUWAIT (AP) — The coast guard has intercepted four wooden boats headed for Iraq with cargoes of auto spares, tires and computers in violation of U.N. sanctions, the Interior Ministry said Wednesday. A statement said three of the boats were flying the flag of the United Arab Emirates, while the fourth carried the Panamanian flag. All had sailed from the UAE and were escorted back there by "friendly forces" after the interceptions, the ministry said without saying when they took place. However, it was commenting on a report by the Kuwait daily, Al Rai Al Am, that authorities had intercepted a number of Iraq-bound speedboats at dawn Tuesday.

Hizbollah claims attacks on SLA

BEIRUT (AFP) — Hizbollah on Wednesday claimed to have killed and wounded several pro-Israeli militiamen in two attacks against their positions in Israel's "security zone" in South Lebanon. But the radio of the South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia made no mention of the attacks in its news broadcasts and there was no independent confirmation of the report. According to Hizbollah, its guerrillas destroyed SLA fortifications at the Anan position during clashes with militiamen with automatic weapons and anti-tank rockets, and shelled the neighbouring outpost of Mesthaqa. Lebanese police said Israeli gunners retaliated by firing 30 shells at the Iqim Al Tufah, a Hizbollah stronghold in South Lebanon. There were no reports of casualties.

Arafat in Hanoi

HANOI (AFP) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat arrived in Hanoi Wednesday from Beijing on the second stop of an Asian tour. This is his sixth visit to Vietnam since 1970, where he has long been accorded the red-carpet treatment given to heads of state. Mr. Arafat is to hold talks with the troika of top leaders — his host President Le Duc Anh, Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet and Communist Party General Secretary Do Mnoi.

Israeli minister due here Sunday

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Wednesday instructed his transport minister to visit Jordan this weekend for the first official contact between his right-wing government and an Arab state. Transport Minister Yitzhak Levy will travel to Amman Sunday to inaugurate a regular airline service between Amman and Tel Aviv, cabinet secretary Danny Naveb said after the first meeting of Mr. Netanyahu's 16-member council of ministers. Mr. Levy is a leader of the far-right National Religious Party, whose supporters include many militant settlers on the West Bank.

Yilmaz faces probe

ANKARA (AFP) — Parliament on Wednesday decided to launch an enquiry against Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz regarding his alleged role in a banking scandal five years ago. The motion accepted by parliament accuses Mr. Yilmaz of ignoring unlawful loans opened by a state bank when he was prime minister in 1991. A parliamentary commission will be set up next month to investigate the charges against Mr. Yilmaz. If the commission finds Mr. Yilmaz guilty and the parliament's general assembly upholds such a ruling, the prime minister will face trial by the constitutional court, the country's highest judiciary body.

Jordan seeks Arab reconciliation, solidarity from summit

Kingdom supports return of Golan to Syria and Palestinian state

By Nermeen Murad and Yasser Abu Hatab
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordanians share the widespread feeling among fellow Arabs that next week's summit meeting in Cairo will be the first real test of their leaders' resolve to overcome their differences and put their house in order after six years of serious divisions, political estrangement and bickering. But for this goal to be met, Jordanian officials say, the summiters have to accept that Arab national security is indivisible amongst individual Arab states.

"Arab national security is a collective responsibility of all our states and it is indivisible as such," a senior Jordanian official says. "Jordan is going to the summit with open hearts and minds, and we have one objective to achieve. It is reconciliation and true solidarity among all Arab countries."

For Jordan, the summit poses a special challenge on

two fronts: Preserving a collective Arab commitment to the Middle East peace process despite the election of a right-wing government in Israel and ensuring that the summit's deliberations and resolutions "are not geared to serving any single Arab country's interest at the expense of another," the Jordanian officials say.

Jordan "will call for solidarity and all-out reconciliation among the Arab countries, and His Majesty King Hussein will reflect Jordan's true Arab stand as he always did," the senior official told the Jordan Times Wednesday.

Notwithstanding the Syrian media campaign against Jordan, the official stressed Amman's position "will be fully supportive of Syria's just demand for the restoration of the Golan Heights." Jordan rejects the Israeli Likud Party's view that Syria's regional role is more important than "recovering usurped Syrian lands."

Unidentified senior Syrian

officials have recently been accusing Jordan of siding with Israel. In a series of articles published in the London-based Al Hayat newspaper the Syrian officials claimed that Jordan was making contacts with Gulf states in a bid to put pressure on Syria to explain its alliance with Iran which Bahrain accuses of being involved in subversion activities in the Gulf emirate.

The senior Jordanian official said, however, Jordan "will not attack any other Arab country unless others attacked first."

"We will respond to accusations that we are going fast (in relations with Israel) by paying others in the same coin. We will respond to whoever tries to enter through the Turkish door by raising the question of Iran's role," he said.

"Arab security is an integral and inseparable one whether it is the security of Syria, Jordan, Palestine or Bahrain."

Another Jordanian official

said that Jordan feels that the summit should come up with a "set of principles" that would guide Arab dealings and ensure a policy of non-interference in the internal stability of other states. The official says that the recent series of official visits by King Hussein, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti to various Arab capitals were aimed at ensuring an consensus among Arab states.

Contacts with the U.S., Turkey and European capitals are also aimed at ensuring international backing for this effort.

Jordan, according to the officials, is seeking not only to ensure that there would be no more attempts at destabilising its own internal security, but also that the Middle East peace process would not fall apart in reaction to the election of a Likud government in Israel.

Informed sources confirmed that recent visits by senior Jordanian officials

abroad were aimed at ensuring that there is a core group of Arab states who want to see the Cairo summit succeed in its task of bridging Arab differences and is not "hijacked" by Syria, and by extension Iran.

Jordan "supports any endeavour aimed at Arab reconciliation and we welcome any effort at mediation to reconcile King Hussein and Hafez Al Assad," the official said in response to reports the Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak is leading such an effort.

The King's visit to the United States, the official said, was one of the most successful so far adding that "King Hussein was accorded an unprecedented welcome."

Jordan does not expect the summit to "result in a surprise with regard to the peace process or Iraq" because the U.S. administration has already told the Egyptian leadership that they expect from Egypt "to play its 'logical' role and that surprises will be unacceptable," the official



said. According to the official the summit is expected to end up with a big "yes" for peace regardless of reservations. Referring to the Palestinians, the official reiterated Jordan's stand by saying the Kingdom will continue to help them regain their rights.

"We reject the Likud Party's idea of discussing everything except the Palestinian state on the same basis as we reject Israel's policy of discussing everything except the Golan — with Syria."

The Jerusalem Post reported Wednesday: President Assad is brilliant, but he may have miscalculated and lost his chance to recover the Golan Heights. This assessment came from President Clinton in a private White House meeting of a half dozen or so business and civic leaders on Monday.

The participant quoted Mr. Clinton as saying: "Of all the Middle East leaders that I have met, I don't think anyone is smarter — as far as IQ is concerned — than President Assad. The man is brilliant. But I can tell you that, during the last three and a half years, nobody has wasted such an IQ on such small issues. During the last three and a half years, he has missed critical opportunities which may never again reappear."

Summit draft said to condition Arab ties with Israel on peace

CAIRO (Agencies) — Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia have drawn up a draft resolution for the Arab summit next week which links normalisation with Israel with the peace process, a senior Foreign Ministry official said Wednesday.

"During their meeting Monday in Cairo, the foreign ministers of Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia agreed on a draft resolution," the Egyptian official, who asked not to be named, told AFP.

The resolution calls for a "reevaluation of the process of normalisation launched by Arab countries if Israel does not respect the basis of the peace process, particularly the principle of land for peace," he said.

Egypt's foreign minister, Amr Musa, met with his Syrian counterpart Farouk Al Sharaa and Saudi Foreign Minister Saud Al Faisal in Cairo on Monday in a closed-door session.

But the summit in Cairo will underline the Arabs' commitment to the peace process as a "strategic choice," the official said.

He said the headline "programme of the government of Israel's new Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu re-

duced some of the differences which could have come up over the tone of the draft resolution."

The three countries will also propose "to Arab heads of state reactivating (regular) Arab summits to reinforce collective Arab action in the future," he added.

"The summit aims basically to establish a common Arab position to face developments in the peace process," he said, adding that "two items are on the agenda: Common Arab action and the peace process."

From the 21 states to attend the summit, 14 will be represented by their heads of state.

Iraq is the only Arab state not to be invited due to rivalries still remaining six years after its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Meanwhile Syria rejected a call by Mr. Netanyahu to hold unconditional negotiations, saying it had not been taken in by his words of peace.

The official Syrian Times said fears that the Middle East peace process was facing its "gravest danger" since its launch in 1991 had been justified by Mr. Netanyahu's headline government prog-

ramme. And it raised doubts as to "what is meant by pre-conditions" after Mr. Netanyahu called on Syria, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia to hold direct talks without any pre-conditions.

"Doesn't this mean that be blows off the basics of the peace process" by ignoring the principle of land-for-peace, the newspaper said. "This policy is an open and candid contradiction of the peace process."

Mr. Netanyahu told the Israeli parliament as he presented his new cabinet on Tuesday: "I make an appeal to all Arab leaders, and in particular President Assad of Syria, Lebanon's President Hrawi and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, let's negotiate directly a peace agreement which will save the Middle East, without pre-conditions."

But he also stressed that Israel's security concerns would take priority in any negotiations with its Arab neighbours.

Lebanese Foreign Minister Fares Bouez also said Mr. Netanyahu's call to hold unconditional negotiations was

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Arab League slams Turkey for trying to 'dictate' Cairo summit

CAIRO (Agencies) — The Arab League on Wednesday slammed Turkey for warning the upcoming Arab summit not to make any pronouncements hostile to Ankara in its disputes with Syria.

"Turkey has no right to dictate to Arab countries the resolution which they should take to defend their sovereignty, water resources or dignity," Arab League Deputy Secretary General Muwafaq Allaf told journalists.

"We had hoped that statements by Turkish officials would be reassuring rather than increase the Arabs' impression that Ankara is ignoring the ties of good-neighbourliness with them," he added.

Turkish sources said Turkish Foreign Minister Emre Gonsensaya sent a letter to his Arab counterparts warning them not to "create a rift between Turkey and the Arab World" by adopting a resolution "which could offend Turkey."

Turkey's Ambassador to Cairo Yasar Yakis met Arab

League head Esmat Abdul Meguid on Wednesday to discuss a dispute between Turkey and Syria and Iraq over the waters of the Euphrates river.

Dr. Abdul Meguid stressed to the ambassador "the determination of the league to arrive at a just solution" to the dispute, league sources said.

But the league head also expressed his "deep concern" at the "latest developments on the Turkish-Syrian border and the Israeli-Turkish naval manoeuvres held near Syrian shores."

Mr. Abdul Meguid warned that "the joint military manoeuvres of Israel and Turkey increase Arab doubts about the scope of military accord signed by the two countries" in February, the sources said.

The ambassador repeated the Turkish position that the military accord "is not directed at the Arabs," the sources said.

cooperation accord, under which their two air forces can notably train in each other's skies.

Turkey said Wednesday it would refuse all dialogue with Syria until Damascus stopped what Ankara describes as its support for terrorism.

Speaking to journalists a day after Syria urged talks to prevent an escalation in tension along the border, Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman Omer Akbel said Syria must stop supporting terrorism before talks could take place.

"The first condition of any significant talks between Turkey and Syria is that Syria must stop supporting terrorism," Mr. Akbel said.

Syria has denied massing troops on its border with Turkey but accused Ankara of building up its own forces on the desert frontier as relations between the two countries have deteriorated over the water dispute and over Turkish accusations that

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Peace process needs assurances from its 'global partners' — Prince Hassan

'Jordan has national, regional obligations to ensure comprehensive peace in Mideast'

From Ayman Al Safadi in Montreal

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS Crown Prince Hassan Wednesday called on the international community to reaffirm its commitment to peace in the Middle East and stressed the need for assurances from "the global partners" in the peace process

that the peace efforts will stay the course in light of the Israeli elections that brought the hardline Likud back to power in Israel.

In an address to the National Council on Canada Arab Relations on the third and final day of a three-day official visit to Canada, the Crown Prince said that Jordan "remains keenly aware

of" the risks and dangers of a derailed peace process. "We have national as well as regional obligations to ensure that the achievement of a comprehensive peace remains the prime objective of all parties," he said.

"Jordan has not only supported the regional peace process but provided a leadership role in furthering and

strengthening its implementation," Prince Hassan told the gathering, which was also attended by the Canadian Jewish Congress.

By virtue of its geographic and cultural proximity to Palestine, Jordan does not have the luxury of "isolating ourselves from the economic

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Netanyahu enters office with vow for 'peace' on own terms

Combined agency dispatches

BENYAMIN NETANYAHU moved into Israeli office Wednesday, completing a shift of power that has alarmed Arabs who fear for the future of the fragile peace process.

In his inaugural address Tuesday, Mr. Netanyahu called on Syria, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia to negotiate peace "without preconditions" — a reference to Syria's past insistence that Israel agree to a total return of the Golan Heights before details of a peace treaty are worked out.

Mr. Netanyahu said he would negotiate with the

Palestinian National Authority (PNA) but warned that Israel's army would have "full freedom of action to act against terrorism." Chasing suspects into autonomous Palestinian cities would violate the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) accords.

Mr. Netanyahu, at 46, the country's youngest leader, told Shimon Peres, the 72-year-old Nobel Peace Prize laureate he defeated on May 29, that together they should work for peace. Mr. Netanyahu later held his first cabinet meeting.

"Despite the differences between us, perhaps even deep differences, the thing that unites us is the thing that

unites the entire country — and that's the desire to see the state of Israel marching forward to the 21st century assured of protection and achieving peace with our neighbours," Mr. Netanyahu, the Likud party leader, said at the official handover ceremony.

Arab leaders — worried about Likud's avowed plans to revive a Jewish settlement boom in occupied lands and rejection of land-for-peace policies — have scheduled the first Arab summit in six years in Cairo on Saturday.

New Foreign Minister David Levy asserted that Arab leaders planning the

U.S. moves to tighten sanctions on Libya, Iran

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly Wednesday to tighten sanctions on Iran and Libya setting the stage for a new showdown over unilateral sanctions with U.S. allies.

Members of the 435-seat Lower House voted 415-0 in favour of the Iran oil sanctions act, which calls for U.S. sanctions on oil companies that invested \$40 million or more in Iranian oil and gas in a single year.

The provision would tighten a trade embargo President Bill Clinton slapped on Iran in June 1994 as part of a drive to isolate the regime, which Washington accuses of supporting terrorism.

The measure would also empower the president to sanction companies that violate U.N. embargoes against Libya, imposed because of Tripoli's refusal to hand over two suspects in the 1988 bombing of a U.S. jetliner in which 270 people died.

Mr. Clinton supports the legislation. A similar bill has already passed the 100-seat Senate. The House and Senate versions were expected to be reconciled by a conference committee.

House passage of the bill comes three months after Mr. Clinton signed a law allowing former owners of property seized by Fidel Castro's Cuban government to sue U.S. courts foreign firms that have benefited from investment in confiscated property in Cuba that was owned by U.S. nationals.

Ekeus seeks access to Iraqi sites amid hostile reception

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — U.N. envoy Rolf Ekeus was branded a "liar" and a tool of the United States as he began a mission here Wednesday to urge Iraq to stop preventing his inspectors from searching sites suspected of harbouring banned weapons material.

Mr. Ekeus, chairman of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) on disarmament, arrived in Baghdad from Bahrain and was to start talks here late Wednesday with Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz and other senior Iraqis. U.N. officials said.

He said in Bahrain Tuesday that "Iraq must allow the inspection team to visit and inspect immediately and un-

conditionally, all the sites, all the installations and all the equipment that we deem necessary."

The former Swedish diplomat arrived with his personal staff and Nikita Smidovich, a Russian ballistic weapons expert whose team was denied complete or partial access to five sites during a five-day standoff last week.

Mr. Ekeus told the Saudi daily Al Ashraq Al Awsat meanwhile that Iraq remained a "threat to the region" because it still had at least six missiles and their launchers.

A site at Abu Gharib west of Baghdad, which the Iraqis barred access to last week,

may contain "nuclear material other material, linked to missiles and documents on arms purchases," he also told the newspaper.

Iraq said Friday that inspections of the Republican Guard sites could only take place in the presence of Mr. Ekeus and Mr. Aziz, but its terms were rejected by the U.N. Security Council which has demanded unconditional access.

A team of 54 inspectors led by Mr. Smidovich was pulled out of Iraq on Sunday by the U.N. and returned to Manama after Iraq for five days refused access to Republican

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U.S., Jordan begin new round of joint military exercises June

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The U.S. and Jordan will begin a session of joint military training exercises in the southern desert of the Kingdom on June 21, a joint statement by the two sides said Wednesday.

It will be the second Jordanian-American joint military exercises this year and is part of a military cooperation programme launched in 1981.

Armed forces of the two countries staged a joint training exercise in early May at the Azraq air force base north of Amman. Advanced jet fighters, including F-16s of the type that Jordan is expected to receive this year took part in the exercises codenamed "Eager Tiger."

The June 21-July 10 exercises, codenamed "Infinite Moonlight," will involve sailors and marines from the U.S. Sixth Fleet and Jordanian Armed Forces units, said the joint statement.

The event, which will take place at Qatranah south of Amman, "will allow U.S. Navy amphibious

forces and Jordanian armed forces to train side-by-side, strengthening the military-to-military relationship and enhancing coordination and cooperation between U.S. and Jordanian forces," it said.

"The exercise is part of the ongoing bilateral exercise programme between the United States military forces of the U.S. Central Command and the military forces of the Kingdom of Jordan," it added.

The American personnel taking part in the exercise will arrive by ship in Aqaba.

Meanwhile, an American air force unit was preparing to leave Jordan after taking part in the May exercises and also flying surveillance flights over southern Iraq.

The "Air Expeditionary Force (AEF)," which consisted of 34 American fighter jets and mid-air refuelling aircraft, arrived in Jordan in April and started the surveillance flights.

For a few days in May, part of the unit joined the "Eager Tiger" exercises.

Officials said the presence of the unit in Jordan also offered Jordanian air force pilots to train on F-16

planes ahead of the expected delivery of 16 of the same type of aircraft to the Kingdom.

They said on Jordanian pilot took part in the surveillance flights over southern Iraq. The surveillance flights are part of the implementation of a U.N. Security Council resolution adopted in 1994 after Iraq reportedly massed troops near its border with Kuwait, raising fears that it might stage another invasion of the emirate it occupied for seven months in 1990 and 1991.

The U.S. State Department said last week that the Clinton administration had notified Congress of the intention to supply 16 F-16s to Jordan and that no hurdles were expected in congressional approval for the move.

Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said the fighter planes could be delivered to Jordan as early as July.

General John Shalikashvili, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, discussed Jordanian-American military cooperation during a visit here this month. Gen. Shalikashvili

also visited the AEF unit at Azraq.

The most senior American military officer told reporters upon his departure after the one-day visit that he was highly impressed by the level of cooperation between the armed forces of the U.S. and Jordan and that Washington was working on further military assistance to Jordan.

He indicated that armed tanks, helicopters and military equipment were part of the U.S. assistance to the Kingdom.

In addition, the AEF unit also helped Jordan upgrade facilities at the Azraq air base to receive and accommodate F-16 planes and is leaving behind part of the equipment it brought with it.

A senior U.S. Defence Department official, Under-Secretary for Personnel and Readiness Edwin Dorn, visited Amman last week and held talks with Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Field Marshal Abdul Hafez Mirai on U.S.-Jordanian military ties.



A cleaning woman cleans the floor of the International Convention Centre in Cairo on Wednesday, two days before an Arab summit is due to take place there. At least 11 Arab leaders will attend the summit in an attempt to form a solid Arab front (Reuters photo)

Summit hopes to keep dogs of war at bay

CAIRO (AFP) — Arab leaders hold a two-day summit here next week amid fears that new right-wing Israeli leader Benjamin Netanyahu could stall the peace process plunging the region once more into a spiral of violence.

"Although Arab countries are ready to give Mr. Netanyahu the benefit of the doubt," according to Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa, they fear they risk a return to the almost daily bloodshed that plagued the area for decades.

"The new leaders in Israel are only too aware of the dangers of moving away from the peace process," warned Mahmoud Abbas, one of the architects of the Palestinian-Israeli peace accord.

"Such a move could take us back to the level of confrontation which existed before the signing of the declaration of principles in September 1993," which led to the staggered launch of Palestinian

self-rule in the Gaza Strip and most major West Bank towns. His fears were echoed by Said Kamal, Arab League deputy secretary general for Palestinian affairs.

"Israel will be faced with a new intifada in the short term if it puts into practice the policies outlined by Netanyahu" in his campaign, he said, referring to the seven-year Palestinian uprising, when Israeli soldiers were pined daily against angry youngsters in the territories.

It is a measure of the strength of their fears that Arab states managed to put aside their deep divisions to call the first summit in six years from June 22-23 in Cairo after the upset election result.

Mr. Netanyahu squeezed out peace architect incumbent Prime Minister Shimon Peres in the May 29 polls playing on voters' security fears and ruling out further land concessions to the Arabs in return for

peace.

The programme of the new coalition government rejects any Palestinian state, the division of Jerusalem and the return of the Golan Heights to Syria and pledges instead to increase Jewish settlements on the West Bank.

"This programme closes the circle of peace and completely returns us to ideological conflict," said Hassan Asfour, director-general of the Palestinian National Authority's negotiations department.

"It means a widening of the political and popular confrontation," he said. In the two weeks since Mr. Netanyahu's victory, there have been a series of bloody reminders of the violence constantly simmering under the surface of daily life.

Hizbollah guerrillas, who have killed nine Israeli soldiers since the polls, pledged on June 10 to turn southern Lebanon into a "volcano" to force Israeli forces out of the

occupied border strip.

And three Israelis have been killed in Israel and on the West Bank in apparently random shootings blamed on Palestinians.

Ironically both the Israeli internal security agency Shin Bet and Palestinian security chiefs have warned that continued negotiations are the only way to prevent further violence. "If the extreme tendencies (in Israel) win the day, previous tensions will return the region to the era of neither-war-nor-peace, draining the human and economic resources of all," said Osama Al Baz, political adviser to Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. A senior Arab League official said the prospect of Likud hardliner Ariel Sharon as housing minister would signal "the return of the policy of settlements and leave the Palestinians with just two choices: To leave, or launch a new intifada."

Levy, new Israeli foreign minister, poised to be embattled moderate

TEL AVIV (AFP) — David Levy, the foreign minister charged with keeping Israel's fragile new relations in the Arab World alive, is poised to emerge as a powerful moderate voice in a cabinet that counts a number of outspoken hardliners.

But he may lack the power to make key decisions about the future of the peace process, a prerogative which Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is expected to guard zealously.

"Levy will be following Netanyahu's lead, he will be doing more organising of things decided," said Daniel Elazar, head of the Jerusalem centre for public affairs. "He will have some input, but Mr. Netanyahu will be doing the cooking here."

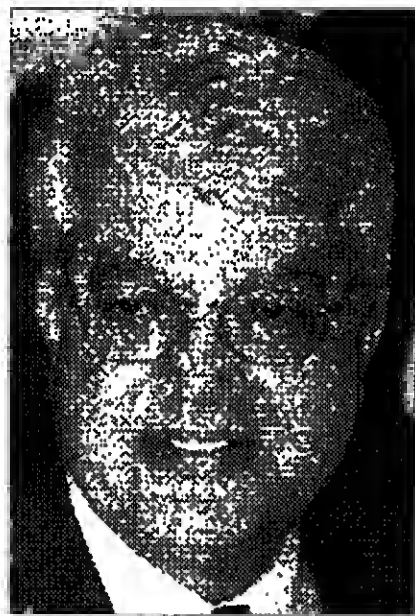
Mr. Levy, 59, is remembered as having been an effective, if perhaps undramatic, foreign minister when he first held the post under the last Likud government, that of Yitzhak Shamir.

Mr. Netanyahu, buoyed by a mandate as Israel's first directly elected prime minister, has made foreign policy his forte in the past as a deputy foreign minister and opposition leader.

The two men will have to overcome a history of acrimonious relations that reached a low in 1993 when Mr. Netanyahu implicitly charged that Levy was involved in trying to blackmail him with a cassette about an extra-marital affair.

Mr. Levy showed his independence on Tuesday when he announced shortly before Mr. Netanyahu was to present his cabinet to parliament that he would not join the government if the hawkish Ariel Sharon — paradoxically a long-time political ally of Mr. Levy — was not also named a minister.

Mr. Netanyahu had been seeking to minimise Mr. Sharon's role in govern-



David Levy

ment to give him a freer hand in dealing with peace issues.

But after hours of tense negotiations, the prime minister finally caved in to Mr. Levy and offered Sharon a newly created but potentially powerful infrastructure ministry to run. Levy in turn agreed to take up the foreign ministry.

Mr. Levy's main policy challenge, as he appeared to acknowledge in recent remarks, will be to maintain the breakthroughs in the Arab World that came in the wake of the 1993 Oslo agreement that launched Palestinian self-rule.

He told journalists shortly after the May 29 elections that "the peace process with the Palestinians is absolutely vital to the government and we are aware of it."

He said that a departure from the Oslo agreement would lead to "great

tension with Arab countries that have relations with Israel."

"Oslo will continue but with more emphasis on security and consensus among Israelis," Mr. Levy said.

Hardline voices in the Mr. Netanyahu government have spoken of "revamping the agreement and of not implementing an Israeli commitment to redeploy troops in the West Bank city of Hebron."

"I can certainly imagine a cabinet debate (about) the building of a new settlement in the West Bank and Levy opposing it," said a former Labour government official who asked not to be identified. "I think he will be a moderating influence, but we do not know what the prime minister will do."

Mr. Levy does not speak English and comes from humble origins, having worked as a bricklayer after immigrating to Israel from Morocco aged 18.

He catapulted from being a trade unionist to a Knesset member in 1969, and gained his first cabinet post in 1977. His credentials as a moderate are not absolute: as housing minister he did oversee large-scale Jewish settlement construction in the West Bank.

Mr. Levy raised eyebrows in his own party with a Knesset speech after the Gulf war in which he declared that Israel would sooner or later have to negotiate with Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip who were cheering Iraqi Scud missile attacks against the Jewish state.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker credited Mr. Levy with making a key contribution in piecing together the October 1991 Madrid conference that brought Israel, the Palestinians and Arab states together in face-to-face negotiations for the first time.

New Israeli defence chief once framed by Shin Bet

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's new defence minister, Yitzhak Mordechai, is a recently retired general who once counted the country's own Shin Bet secret service as his most dangerous enemy.

In a scandal that rocked Israel 12 years ago, the Shin Bet tried to frame Mr. Mordechai for the killing of two Palestinian guerrillas who were beaten to death after commandos stormed an Israeli bus hijacked to the occupied Gaza Strip.

Emerging unscathed, he served as the chief of each of the Israeli army's three regional commands, dealing with security along the northern borders with Lebanon and Syria and inside the Occupied West

Bank. Mr. Mordechai, 52, joined Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud, after considering an offer from Shimon Peres's Labour Party, a year ago.

He had the "right stuff": military credentials to fortify Mr. Netanyahu's pledge of peace with security and his ethnic roots — Mr. Mordechai is of Kurdish descent and popular with Likud's power base of Jews from North African and Arab countries.

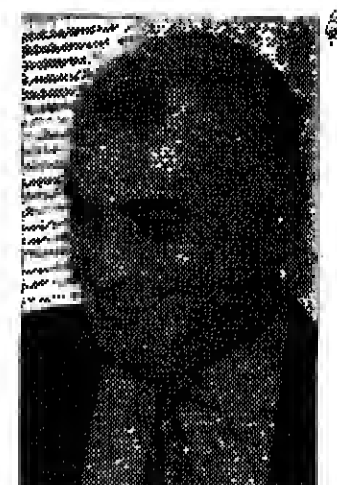
His views on Arab-Israeli peace are not completely clear. On entering politics he said he hoped to prevent Israeli territorial concessions that would put the Jewish state at risk. But Mr. Netanyahu was the Likud's main spokesman

during the recent election campaign and Mr. Mordechai's voice was seldom heard.

Mr. Mordechai's 33-year military career almost ended in 1984 when evidence manufactured by the Shin Bet — whose agents had killed the two bus hijackers — pointed an accusing finger at Mr. Mordechai, who had admitted to pistol-whipping the Arabs.

He was acquitted by a state inquiry after a seven-minute bearing and testimony from soldiers who said the Shin Bet had taken the memo away alive after Mr. Mordechai struck the two Palestinians.

The head of the Shin Bet ultimately resigned over the



Yitzhak Mordechai

cover-up and conspiracy. He and three other agency officials were granted presidential immunity from prosecution.

JORDAN TELEVISION

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PROGRAMME TWO

15:00 ... Duhik Dragon (Cartoon)
15:30 ... Pirates (documentary) NBA
16:40 ... News Flash
17:00 ... News Flash
17:02 ... Children's Programme — Les Pol-lards
17:30 ... Varieties — Les Miroirs Est A
19:00 ... News in French
19:15 ... Magazine — Archimede
19:35 ... Carol and Company
20:00 ... Varieties — Taratara
21:10 ... Star Trek
22:00 ... News in English
22:35 ... Feature Film — "Couch of the Year"

PRAYER TIMES

03:50 ... Fajr
05:25 ... (Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:57 ... Dhuhr
16:17 ... Asr
19:47 ... Maghrib
21:24 ... Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swedish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624581
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

TERRASANTA CHURCH Tel: 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 625236
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian International Church Tel. 652526

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 624328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675991

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614191

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Temperatures are expected to rise slightly with moderate weather conditions continuing to prevail and winds northwesterly moderate to active. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.

Amman ... 16/29

Aqaba ... 21/35

Deserts ... 14/32

Jordan Valley ... 21/35

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 26 Aqaba 35. Humidity readings: Amman 42 per cent. Aqaba 33 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Abdul Majid Al Sha'er 750405

Dr. Fakher Belchid 663412

Dr. Adnan Zaghloul 898140

Dr. Fayez Dahab 759155

Firas pharmacy 661912

Ferdows pharmacy 776336

Al Asema pharmacy 637083

Nairoukh pharmacy 623672

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmoussi pharmacy 637641

Nairoukh pharmacy 623672

Najih pharmacy 847632

IRBID:

Dr. Ghazi Ta'ammeh 258881

Al Quds pharmacy 1-1

ZARQA:

Dr. Akram Haddad 985550

Khalifah pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 671013

Blood Bank 75121

Highway Police 834362

Traffic Police 893990

Public Security Department 83821

Hotel Complaints 605800

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage

Complaints 897467

Amman Municipality

Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010231

Central Amman Telephone

Repairs 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 775111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680101

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power

Company 636381

EU Flight Information 18-5320

Queen Alia Int. Airport 18-53301

HOSPITALS

Hussein Medical Centre 8178132

Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 642816

Akileh Maternity, J. Amn.

AMMAN:

Jabal Amman Maternity 642442

Mallat, J. Amman 626140

Palatine, Shmoussi 670771

Shmoussi Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Muasher Hospital 667274

The Islamic, Abdali 86612707

Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646

Italian, Al-Muhajirin 7710132

Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 7751132

Amey, Al-Marka 89161115

Queen Alia Hospital 66224950

Amal Hospital 671155

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital 109983323

Zarqa National Hospital 109986732

Ibn Sina Hospital 109986732

Al-Hama Modern Hospital 109986732

IRBID:

Princess Beama Hospital 10227555

Good Catholic Hospital 10227275

Ibn Al-Nafies Hospital 10237401

AQAHA:

Princess Ilaya Hospital 10314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) Information Department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. 18-53301.

S, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone (18) 53781.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

06:15 ... Samou (RJ)

06:35 ... Doha (RJ)

06:55 ... Beirut (RJ)

07:20 ... New Delhi (RJ)

07:35 ... Muscat, Dubai (RJ)

07:55 ... Colombo (RJ)

08:15 ... Al 'Ain, Abu Dhabi (add) (RJ)

08:30 ... London (add) (RJ)

08:45 ... London (RJ)

09:15 ... Casablanca (RJ)

Princess Sarvath to deliver keynote address at Canada's New Brunswick College Friday

MONTREAL (J.T.) — Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath will Friday deliver a keynote address at a graduation ceremony at the St. John-based New Brunswick College which has been cooperating with Princess Sarvath Community College on a number of programmes for the last 10 years.

The Brunswick College has helped fund early childhood education programme which Princess Sarvath College started a decade ago.

The two colleges have also been cooperating in the two-year old learning difficulties programme which Princess Sarvath College launched to help train Ministry of Education and private school teachers detect, diagnose and deal with learning difficulties that young students have.

During a meeting with officials at the Canadian Association of Community Colleges (ACCC) earlier this week, Princess Sarvath, who is accompanying His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on an official visit to Canada, briefed Canadian officials on the progress of the programme and discussed with them means of further enhancing cooperation. The Princess

and Tom Norton, who is on the board of trustees of the ACCC, also discussed means of ensuring the sustainability of the learning difficulties programme and explored the possibilities of making the college a regional centre that would train specialists in Jordan and the region on dealing with learning difficulties among young students.

The ACCC has been commissioned by the Canadian Agency for International Development to proceed on cooperating with Princess Sarvath College in the learning difficulties programme which provides unique training for teachers and enable them to help students overcome the serious problems that learning difficulties can cause as they go on pursuing their education. Learning difficulties account for a good percentage of school dropouts among students. Students can be helped if they are looked after by professionals who can help them in their learning process.

Nine Ministry of Education teachers have received special training on learning difficulties in Canada through the programme sponsored by the Princess Sarvath College.



On Tuesday, Princess Sarvath, who is the honorary president of the Jordan Red Crescent Society, visited the Canadian Red Cross Society which is celebrating its centennial and met with its chief executive officer and president. Princess Sarvath briefed officials at the society on the activities of the Jordanian Red Crescent and discussed with them possibilities of future cooperation between the Jordanian Red Crescent and the Canadian Red Cross. The Princess was also briefed on the activities of the Red Cross Society and the services it offers.

The Princess is accompanied on her visit by the director of the Princess Sarvath College, Radhi Al Waqfi.

Princess Rahma heads Jordan's delegation to Montana Forum

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Royal Highness Princess Rahma Bent Al Hassan will receive on behalf of HRH Crown Prince Hassan the "Prix De La Fondation" the Crans-Montana International Forum's Peace Prize, from the President of the Swiss Federation Jea-Pascal Delamuraz. On this occasion, Princess Rahma will deliver a speech on behalf of the Crown Prince at the opening session of the forum which will convene in Switzerland on Thursday.

The Jordanian delegation to the forum includes forty personalities representing the public and private sectors as well as leading public corporations, members of the Upper House and the Lower House of Parliament, present and former ministers and business leaders from the private and public sectors, presidents of universities, academics, businessmen, and information specialists.

The Jordanian Institute of Diplomacy (ID) is organising the Jordanian participation in the Crans-Montana Forum. Princess Hassan deputised his adviser, the President of the ID Mazin

Armouti to deliver the keynote speech at the session on "Peace and Beyond in the Middle East: A Jordanian View", also speaking at this session will be a number of heads of states, economists, and parliamentarians from the Middle East, Europe and the United States.

The programme of the forum includes a plenary session dedicated to Jordan, where Senator Kamel Abu Jaber will deliver a speech on behalf of Crown Prince Hassan on "Jordan in the Regional Context". Another speaker will be the president of the Jordan Cement Manufacturing Company's board of directors Bassam Saket.

As for the special session, investment opportunities in Jordan "it will include presentations by the Ministry of Planning Secretary General Nabeel Ammari, Director General of Amman Stock Exchange Market Umayya Toukan, and Director General of the Investment Promotion Corporation Taleb Al Rifai. This session will be attended by a number of business leaders and economists from around the world.



Her Royal Highness Princess Rahma Bent Al Hassan

Within the framework of the Jordanian participation in the forum, a variety of activities to promote Jordan will be organised. Chief among those is a "Jordanian Night" which will be opened by Sharif Jamil Ben Nasser who will deliver a

speech on behalf of Prince Hassan.

The Crans-Montana Forum which will end June 23, is one of the leading intellectual, political and economic international forums in the world today.

Tunis meeting to endorse MEMTTA charter

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The General Assembly of Middle East Mediterranean Travel and Tourism Association (MEMTTA) will officially convene for the first time next week in Tunis to endorse its charter and to register members.

Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Saleh Irshaidat and Ministry Secretary General Akram Masarweh will head a delegation of members of Jordan's tourism sector including president of the Jordan Society of Tourist and Travel Agents Association Lami Haddadin and Nicola Sabaneh, Manager of the Jordan Travel Bureau and acting vice president of MEMTTA's executive council.

According to Mr Masarweh, who serves on MEMTTA's board of governors, the first general assembly will begin to tackle a unified marketing

policy for the Middle East and discuss the possibility of adding new members to MEMTTA's eight-member roster.

MEMTTA, one of the three regional economic bodies initiated during the Middle East And North African Economic Summit hosted in Amman last year, was lauded as the "first fruit" of MENA, and was established with the hope of transforming the Middle East into the "next global super destination". It will operate as the regional coordinating body for travel and tourism of the Middle East/Mediterranean region.

Jordan, Egypt, Israel, the Palestinian National Authority, Cyprus, Morocco and Tunisia first signed the organisation's charter, developed under the auspices of the Regional Economic Development Working Group (REDWG), during the summit. Since that time, Turkey has also let its signature to the charter.

The association's primary mission is to "organise tourism and increase travel to the region by harmonising laws and regulations governing the industry throughout the region. It also plans to provide education and training, establish a database on travel trends and carry out marketing activities."

"MEMTTA will be able to provide a great number of benefits to its members if they take it seriously," said Mr. Sabaneh. "There are many fields that need special activities and attention, such as visa formalities, joint programmes, and something very important for Jordan, marketing abroad and a database of the area's statistics."

The public-private sector body is governed by a council of governors, of ministers and secretaries general who set policy, while an executive council, constituting members of the private sector, oversees the organisation's activities.

Jordan-Dutch society formed

AMMAN (J.T.) — A Jordanian-Dutch Friendship Society has recently been formed in Amman in order to bolster cultural, social and economic relations between the Netherlands and the Kingdom.

Society Chairman Raouf Abu Jaber said that the society aimed at boosting friendly relations through the exchange of visits by people from the two countries, the exchange of cultural activities, the organisation of lectures and sports events.

Dr Abu Jaber, who is honorary consul of the Netherlands in the Kingdom said that the 10-member society board formed Monday has elected Aris Bryun and Samir Metawe' as advisers to the board which includes Hanna Odeh, Paula Sayegh, Nabil Hamoudeh, Thabet Al Taher, Osama Al Shahed, Ibrahim Ahul Yaman, Elle Saaf, Thea Fages and Ihsan Azmi Farah.

By Haya Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Mid-Decade Meeting of the International Consultative Forum on Education For All rounded up its review of progress in worldwide educational goals in a communique that indicated "significant" but "slow" progress in extending basic education in the past six years.

Declaring that "the right to education is nothing less than the right to participate in the life of the modern world", the communique reaffirmed the goals set in Jomtien, Thailand during the World Conference on Education For All (EFA) in 1990 and vowed to "intensify efforts to achieve education for all."

During the final day of the review meeting, discussions emphasised the excess of rhetoric on girls' education in developing countries, calling for more definite action in an area deemed to be the "single most important investment" to be made in education for all.

Discussions also called for more focus on early childhood development and military expenditures were criticised as overriding the

interests of expenditures on social and educational programmes in developing countries.

Early childhood development programmes which have "enormous potential...in supporting active learning and capacities and promoting the overall well-being of the child...remain seriously under-developed in many countries," the communique affirmed.

Concerning "wasteful expenditure on armaments," the communique spoke of "measures to reduce debt burdens, including transforming liabilities into assets through debt swaps, with policies that promote investments in a nation's people and future."

Further shortfalls included the "some 900 million adult illiterates, nearly two-thirds of them women," and the lack of "essential links" between basic education and secondary, and higher education and technical and vocational skills.

If the achievements of the last six years give reason for optimism, they provide no room for complacency, the communique stated.

With Jordan being termed the "turning point" of educational commitments, and the years 1990-

1995 "the years of recovery", Amman will now "mark the point of acceleration," said Richard Jolly of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in a closing speech on behalf of the convenors.

Mr Jolly outlined six core action priorities as part of the acceleration programme required for the next five years.

These include: First, raising the quality of schooling, ensuring its relevance, improving learning and strengthening the teaching force and process.

Second, closing the gap on gender inequalities in access to education.

Third, an accelerated and qualitative approach to be made to reach the goal of education for all.

Fourth, prioritising basic education to support action with national resources.

Fifth, the international community needs to form new alliances in support of poorer and less developed countries in EFA goals.

partnerships between communities.

This entails partnerships of support between a wide range of organisations within the community: religious, voluntary organisations, the business sector, the media and even parliamentarians.

The communique nonetheless affirmed that "real" progress had been made in the years since Jomtien.

The fact that there are "today 20 million fewer children out-of-school than at the start of the decade" is an indication that efforts on the parts of government have been "concerted".

New partnerships have emerged, new resources have been tapped and new energies and ideas have been devoted to making education for all a reality, according to the statement.

Quoting Armean Chocksi, Vice-President of the World Bank, during his closing speech yesterday, Mr. Jolly said: "It is intolerable that, as the world approaches the 21st century, hundreds of millions of people still lack minimally acceptable levels of education, health and nutrition. Investing in people must therefore be the highest priority in developing countries."

10 Palestinians end RSS course

AMMAN (J.T.) — A group of 10 Palestinian engineers and technicians working at West Bank and Gaza hospitals Wednesday ended a three-month training course at the Royal Scientific Society (RSS) which was funded by the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

In a speech at the graduation ceremony RSS Vice President Said Allush said that the JICA has promised to finance future RSS's training programmes for the Palestinians in different fields.

Dr Alloush said that the RSS offered and will continue to offer its facilities for the Palestinian trainees to ensure the best possible services for the Palestinian institutions.

Mr Seisuke Shimizu, the first secretary at the Japanese embassy in Amman, said that technical cooperation between Japan and the RSS has contributed to the strengthening of Jordanian Japanese ties.

Ministry moves against beggars

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Social Development Wednesday announced that it was taking measures to end street begging.

A ministry statement said that the measures were called for after it noted an increase in the number of beggars.

Minister of Social Development Hamad Abu Jamous who announced measures Wednesday said that there was need for such campaign especially against certain beggars who pretend to have disabilities and beg from pedestrians and motorists near traffic lights and around places of worship.

The Minister urged the public to ignore these beggars and those who pretend to be homeless and refuse to help them, and to contact the social defence department at his ministry to help the concerned authorities.

He said that needy people can get financial and other aid from the National Aid Fund and

other institutions which study their social conditions before providing them with financial assistance or rehabilitation programmes to enable them to earn a decent living.

In April the Ministry of Social Development announced that 60 beggars and homeless persons were picked up in round-ups around the country by ministry officials and were referred to the Public Security Department or the National Aid Fund to help process their cases.

The statement said that the 60 people detained ranged in age from seven to 60 years.

A 1960 law prohibits begging and as such many of the detained individuals normally face court charges, according to the ministry which said some of the beggars came to Jordan from neighbouring Arab countries and others have made a profession of begging.

Government to involve private sector in power generation

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Hashem Dabhas said Wednesday that the government is going ahead with plans to involve the private sector in building and operating power generation plants with the purpose of meeting the growing demand for electricity in Jordan.

Private sector generated electricity could be marketed locally or distributed to neighbouring countries said the minister at a symposium organised by the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) in cooperation with the World Bank.

A new electricity law allows the private sector to invest in power generation has been passed but is awaiting final approval, according to JEA chief

engineer for technical and corporate planning Mohammad Azzam.

The law marks the start of commercialisation of JEA which has been discussed by experts, government officials and the JEA management over the last two years, and aims at increasing efficiency at the managerial and financial levels and at creating the atmosphere for the involvement of the private sector which would relieve the government of the burden of heavy investments, according to Mr Azzam.

In 1994 the government approved plans for transforming the JEA—which is in charge of producing and selling electric power — into a state owned company in order to boost electricity generation in

Jordan.

Mr Azzam said that the participants at the symposium include engineers from JEA and the Palestine National Authority will discuss ways to develop power generation plants by the private sector and review experiments of the other countries in this field.

A team of World Bank specialists submitted presentations and discussed the energy situation in a number of countries pointing to an expected increase in demand on power generation. They said that the World Bank has vast experience and would offer financial and technical help in power generation.

SWIMMING CLINICS

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CLINICS CONDUCTED BY

IRAQI'S NATIONAL TEAM COACH
ASSISTED BY THE JORDANIAN NATIONAL TEAM MEMBERS

DATES OF CLINICS

2 WEEK CLINICS SATURDAY THROUGH WEDNESDAY OF EVERY WEEK

1ST CLINIC SAT JUNE 22ND - WED JULY 3RD

2ND CLINIC SAT JULY 6TH - WED JULY 17TH

3RD CLINIC SAT JULY 20TH - WED JULY 31ST

AGE GROUP & TIME

5-8 YEARS FROM 9:30 - TO 11:30

9-13 YEARS FROM 11:30 - TO 1:30

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Yeltsin on top as election race enters final stretch

MOSCOW (AFP) — President Boris Yeltsin had the upper hand Wednesday over his Communist challenger Gennady Zyuganov as they wrestled for the huge floating vote ahead of their run-off election early next month.

Mr. Yeltsin, who pipped Mr. Zyuganov by just three per cent in the first round of voting Sunday, won a boost with the implicit endorsement of Grigory Yavlinsky, a liberal economist who won almost eight per cent of the vote in the first round.

Mr. Yavlinsky called on supporters of his Yabloko Party to back the initiator of Russia's liberal reforms, although he said he doubted he would join a future Yeltsin government. Interfax News Agency reported.

"Never under any circumstances will the Yabloko Party support Gennady Zyuganov," Mr. Yavlinsky was quoted as saying by Interfax. "That's out of the question."

Mr. Yeltsin won 35.02 per cent in the first round, Mr. Zyuganov 31.95 per cent. In the second round, the winner will be the man who can capture the remaining third of the votes divided up in the first round among eight other candidates.

On Tuesday, Mr. Yeltsin took a giant leap when he lured the third-placed candidate in the first round, tough talking retired General Alexander Lebed, into his government as national security chief. He also fired the unpopular Defence Minister Pavel Grachev.

Mr. Yeltsin hopes that his alliance with Gen. Lebed will secure him the 15 per cent of the vote won by the popular, 46-year-old officer.

Undaunted, Mr. Zyuganov also met with the general Wednesday and indicated he would include him in his coalition government in case of victory.

"The country is destined to have a government of national coalition. It is clear to all thinking men that the country is divided — one third voted for Yeltsin, one third for us," Mr. Zyuganov was quoted as saying by Interfax.

Asked if he would accept Gen. Lebed, Mr. Zyuganov said: "You can't put the question like that. All men who have knowledge, capability and talent, who would like to serve the country, could enter a coalition."

Asked if Gen. Lebed would work for Mr. Zyuganov, now that he had cast his lot with Mr. Yeltsin, Lebed aide Vladimir Titov said: "Lebed respects the right of the people and will work with the president chosen by the people," ITAR-TASS news agency reported.

No date has been fixed for the run-off, but Mr. Zyuganov hacked Wednesday a call by Mr. Yeltsin to hold the vote on July 3.

The date requires parliamentary approval because it falls mid-week, while the law states elections must be held on holidays.

The parliament will vote on the matter Friday.

Mr. Yeltsin is pushing for a weekday to ensure a higher turnout.

Analysts say Mr. Yeltsin was hurt in the first round by a lower than expected turnout of about 70 per cent because many people had gone out to country cottages for the entire

weekend.

Mr. Zyuganov's Communists are known as disciplined voters, while Mr. Yeltsin supporters may have been more likely not to bother to return to the cities early.

Gen. Lebed, suddenly the darling of the Russian press, made a sensational start in his new job as Russian Security Council secretary by claiming that Gen. Grachev and other generals had plotted a coup Tuesday.

"I took preventive measures against all sorts of conflict, war, and, if they took place, to extinguish them," Gen. Lebed said in a television interview.

One of the alleged plotters, Georgian Defence Minister Vardiko Nadibaidze, denied any connection Wednesday, saying "I could not and I did not have the right to discuss, nor to mention or involve myself in what was going on in Moscow."

It was unclear whether there really had been a plot, or whether Gen. Lebed was preparing the way for a purge of top generals in the wake of Gen. Grachev's departure.

But his statements were met with incredulity in Moscow. Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin was quoted by Interfax as saying he was "extremely surprised" and that the coup talk was "silly."

"Lebed has made mountains out of molehills," said Pavel Bunich, from the pro-Yeltsin Our Home Is Russia party. "That proves his weakness."

It was also unclear whether Gen. Lebed would be able to transfer his popular support to Mr. Yeltsin, or whether voters would see him as a turncoat.

"The term 'political prostitute' fits Lebed like a glove," said a member of the extreme nationalist Liberal Democratic Party, who asked not to be named.

Gen. Lebed held an unscheduled meeting in the general staff of the armed forces Wednesday to discuss possible personnel changes in the top brass, RIA news agency said.

The meeting followed Tuesday's remarks by Gen. Lebed that a group of senior generals had tried to put pressure on President and Commander-in-Chief Yeltsin Tuesday, in an unsuccessful bid to stop him sacking Gen. Grachev.

RIA said a group of top generals who had retired from the armed forces during Gen. Grachev's term in office were taking part in the meeting.

The Russian media has speculated that one of these generals might be considered as possible successor to the deeply unpopular Grachev.

Mr. Yeltsin named Chief of the General Staff General Mikhail Kolesnikov as acting defence minister.

"The aim of the meeting was to work out recommendations for...the president on renewing the leadership of the armed forces and the general staff," RIA said.

Gen. Lebed said Tuesday he had had to defuse a possible crisis after five generals had tried to persuade Gen. Grachev to put the army on red alert to put pressure on Mr. Yeltsin.

He said the five, whom he named, should resign but indicated that no further action would be taken against them if they did so.



Russian President Boris Yeltsin (right) gives to reserve General Alexander Lebed his decree naming him national security adviser and secretary of the Security Council in the Kremlin (Reuters photo)

Adams told to break with IRA

BELFAST (AFP) — Gerry Adams, leader of the Irish Republican Army's (IRA) political wing Sinn Fein, faces intense pressure from both London and Dublin to condemn the IRA's terrorist activities, which continue to bar his party from ongoing peace talks in Belfast.

A fresh plenary session of these multi-party talks, 10 days after their formal opening, took place Wednesday in Belfast between the British and Irish governments, and the Protestant and Catholic parties of Ulster.

Sinn Fein remains excluded because the IRA has refused so far to reinstate the 17-month ceasefire it broke in February with a massive bomb in London.

The pressure has been mounting on Mr. Adams since early this week, not only to obtain a new IRA ceasefire, but to dissociate Sinn Fein clearly from the IRA's terror tactics.

London, then Dublin, and finally Washington, a vital broker in the peace process, led Sinn Fein know that even if they would continue dialogue with it, the Republican party had to provide proof that it was working to persuade the IRA to end its bombing campaign, which devastated Manchester last weekend.

The suspected IRA bomb, one of the largest ever exploded on the British mainland, left more than 200 people injured and caused huge damage to Manchester city centre.

Opposition Labour leader Tony Blair left Sinn Fein in no doubt that British policy would not be softened, in the case of a change of government.

Adding his voice to that of Prime Minister John Major, who said "the time has come" for Sinn Fein to "make up its mind", Mr. Blair told the Republicans "the moment of truth" had arrived for them.

One of the pillars of the strategy of dialogue with Sinn Fein, Irish Deputy Prime Minister Dick Spring, reaffirmed Wednesday that a firm stance was necessary.

He spoke of the "anger" aroused by the IRA's latest actions — the Manchester bombing is blamed on them and the organisation last week reluctantly owned up to the murder of an Irish policeman.

Mr. Spring denounced the "inconsistency" of Sinn Fein's stance, a party that claims to be committed to non-violence, but cannot condemn the armed campaign of fellow-Republicans.

Dublin has called on Gerry Adams to answer two questions, one about Sinn Fein's "political support" for the IRA's armed struggle, and the other about what

steps it has taken to obtain a new IRA ceasefire.

Observers of the situation in Northern Ireland were split down the middle Wednesday over their interpretation of Mr. Adams's response.

For some, Mr. Adams has, as in the past, refused to condemn explicitly the IRA's actions, tied as he is to the Republicans' military wing and their warlike phraseology.

But others maintain he has gone as far as he dare without betraying Republican solidarity.

Sinn Fein is "not involved in it (the armed struggle) and we do not advocate it. That is the clear concise non-complicated answer to the question", said Mr. Adams.

Concerning his efforts to convince the IRA to declare a ceasefire, he, as usual, refused to "speculate" but said: "The question of what the IRA can or should do is something I am working on and will continue to work at."

The IRA issued statements Tuesday night and Wednesday for the first time since it said, on the eve of the all-party talks in Ulster, that it was "studying" London and Dublin's framework for the negotiations.

In the interval, a bomb went off in Manchester, the day before a European Championship football match.

But the organisation's last communications were surprising: One after another, three separate IRA units stressed the unity of their movement, and did not claim any responsibility for the Manchester bomb attack.

Uncertainty is hanging over the peace process with police, in Northern Ireland having begun armed patrols once again and Protestant terror groups having put their members on full alert.

Pro-British Unionists attacked Dublin Wednesday for failing to sever contacts with Sinn Fein in retaliation for the suspected IRA weekend bomb attack.

"I am very disappointed at the decision of the Irish cabinet yesterday to maintain contact with Sinn Fein," said David Trimble, leader of the powerful Ulster Unionist Party (UUP).

"How can one have any illusions about this organisation any longer after the bomb in Manchester and in view of the regular statements that are coming out from Sinn Fein-IRA," he said.

Mr. Trimble was reacting to the Irish government's decision Tuesday night to maintain contact with Sinn Fein while it sounds out its IRA guerrilla allies on prospects of a renewed truce.

Bangladesh's 2nd round of voting ends peacefully

COMILLA, Bangladesh (AFP) — A second round of voting, crucial for premier-in-waiting Sheikh Hasina Wajed to win an absolute parliamentary majority, ended with a good turnout despite rains and fears of violence.

Election Commission officials said counting of votes in 27 constituencies started immediately after halting closed at 4:00 p.m. (1000 GMT) in the presence of political party representatives.

Full results are expected by early Thursday.

Witnesses said voter turnout was good and so far there was only one report of a failed attempt to disrupt polling.

Military officials told AFP that a group of "miscreants" were obstructing voters from coming to the remote Bauria Centre by indiscriminately firing gun shots to create panic.

Despite the rain, voters turned out in large numbers in most polling centres, some of them in remote villages. In Comilla district, which had the largest number of seats for repolling, about 30 per cent of the votes were cast in the first three hours of voting, which began at 8 a.m. (0200 GMT).

"Last time I could not vote because of violence, but this time I am here to vote for good," said Noorjahan Begum, a housewife.

Student Kamal Hossain said everything was all right, but that there should have been more booths to speed up the process.

In the southeastern port city of Chittagong, polling officials put the average turnout at 50 per cent of registered voters. Turnout was a record 73 per cent of registered voters nationwide in last week's elections.

In the district's remote Rauzan area, a

both of far-right extremism, voters hatred rain and fears of violence as in most other constituencies, but the halting ended peacefully.

"The turnout was comparatively low because of the rain and fears of violence," that marked the June 12 general elections, M.A. Samad Mia, a presiding officer at a polling centre in Rauzan, told AFP.

International and local election monitors, who described last week's elections as "free and fair," had fanned out in the 13 districts where elections were rerun because of violence.

"I went to three centres and talked with everyone... they are all very satisfied," said A. Muhiib, a member of the South Asian non-governmental polls observation team in Comilla.

Added local magistrate Noor Muhammad Majumder: "This time polling centres have been turned into mini-military barracks to prevent outbreak of violence."

Of the 273 seats already gazetted after last week's general elections, Mrs. Hasina's Awami League emerged as the single largest party with 135, the Bangladesh National Party (BNP) followed with 104, the Jatiya Party (JP) held 29 and the Jamaat-E-Islami, three seats. Two went to smaller groups.

The JP, anxiously watching results of the repolling to see if it could retain its role as "queenmaker" in Bangladesh's government, has already offered its support to Mrs. Hasina, who required 16 more seats for an absolute majority.

Mrs. Hasina is to be elected Awami League's parliamentary leader Friday, when her party MPs take the oath of office, clearing her way to become Bangladesh's second woman prime minister.

Mandela receives French honorary title

PARIS (AFP) — South African President Nelson Mandela is being given an honorary degree by the University of Paris (Sorbonne), the French Journal Official reported Wednesday. The decision to grant the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize winner the title was made by the Sorbonne's board of directors, and approved by the minister of higher education on June 10.

Tea is still Britain's top drink

LONDON (AFP) — A cup of tea is still Britain's number one beverage, according to a report out Tuesday which showed Britons drank an average of just under three-and-a-half "cuppas" each every day last year. Tea beat coffee, soft drinks and all alcohol to remain the country's top upple — except for water, the Tea Council's annual report said. The figures for tea are up on the previous year, but long term trends show Britain's love-affair with the cuppa is on the wane. In 1989, Britons drank 10 years and over drank 3.61 cups of tea daily, compared to 3.41 in 1994 and 3.43 in 1995.

Coffee consumption has seen a sharper fall, dropping five per cent between 1994 and 1995 from 1.74 cups a day to 1.65 last year. An overall breakdown of the drinks market in Britain shows that tea accounts for 41.2 per cent of all drinks consumed, coffee and soft drinks for 19.8 per cent each, alcohol for 15.2 per cent and other drinks for four per cent. Illyd Lewis, executive director of the Tea Council, said tea had put in a good performance and remained the most popular drink in the world.

Sewing needles found in donuts in Japan

TOKYO (AFP) — Sewing needles have been found in donuts delivered to a Japanese day-care centre, police said Wednesday. The centre in Shiga prefecture, western Japan, found several needles when it was cutting up the donuts on June 11, a police spokesman said, adding "nobody was injured. A Kobe-based company made the donuts on June 9, and police suspect someone inserted the needles into the donuts after they left the manufacturer, he said. The Kobe company checks products through a metal detector before shipment, and the wrapping around the donuts containing the needles was found to be punctured, the spokesman said.

Officials sacked for consorting with prostitutes

HANOI (AFP) — Three cadres from the central province of Dac Lac were thrown out of the Communist Party for having sex with prostitutes at the offices of the local People's Committee, the youth newspaper Tuoi Tre reported Wednesday. The two heads of the militia and the Assistant Commissioner Of Hoa Thuan district were caught "in flagrante delicto" in April with three prostitutes, the tri-weekly paper said. Their expulsion was recently decided by the provincial party committee of Buon Ma Thuot, the paper added. The paper also reported that a committee secretary in the neighboring district of Dac R'lap, head of the campaign against "social evils", had been stripped of his duties after having had sex with a prostitute in his office. These punishments come as the Vietnamese Communist Party steps up its campaign against "moral degradation" ahead of a national party congress, set to open next week.

FBI told to finish probe on White House files

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno said Tuesday she had asked the FBI to go forward and complete an investigation into the acquisition of more than 400 sensitive FBI background files by the Clinton White House.

In a two-paragraph statement on the escalating controversy that threatens to cause political damage to President Bill Clinton, Ms. Reno said the FBI should conduct "a complete and thorough" investigation.

Ms. Reno, a Clinton appointee, took the action after being informed by Whitewater independent special prosecutor Kenneth Starr's office that he does not have jurisdiction to investigate further the circumstances surrounding the White House's receipt of the files in late 1993 and early 1994.

On Friday, FBI Director Louis Freeh said an initial FBI inquiry found the White House had obtained more than 400 files without justification and that "egregious violations of privacy" had occurred.

But FBI General Counsel Howard Shapiro said in the inquiry that he was unable to conduct a complete probe because Mr. Starr's office had asked him not to interview any of the White House personnel involved.

Ms. Reno said Mr. Starr's office advised her "that it would not impede its investigation if another appropriate investigative or prosecutorial office were now to investigate."

Besides the failed Whitewater land deal in Arkansas involving then-governor Bill and Hillary Rodham Clinton, Mr. Starr also has been investigating the White House Travel Office firings in May 1995.

As part of that investigation, he has been examining why the White House obtained the background files of two fired members of the Travel Office staff.

The disclosure on June 5 that the White House had received the file of fired White House Travel Office chief Billy Ray Dale led to the discovery that hundreds of other files had been obtained, including those on a number of prominent Republicans.

Anthony Marceca, the temporary White House employee who originally asked for the files, gave a deposition Tuesday to staff members of the House of Representatives Government Reform and Oversight Committee, a committee staff member said.

Mr. Marceca's testimony was not made public. Meanwhile Mrs. Clinton once again finds herself at the centre of a political storm because of an explosive Senate investigative report that portrays her as the ringleader of alleged Clinton White House misdeeds.

But the first lady's defenders say she is unruffled by the 800-page report of the Republican-controlled Senate Whitewater Committee, which disputes her credibility and all but accuses her of obstruction of justice.

Friends say Mrs. Clinton, who was never called to testify before the committee, believes the public will dismiss the report as a partisan, election-year attack. They also say they see no evidence that Mrs. Clinton, who played a major supporting role in her Democratic husband's 1992 run for the White House, has become a liability in his battle for a second term.

However, opinion polls consistently show Mrs. Clinton is less popular than her husband. And a CBS/New York Times poll conducted May 31 to June 3 found only 12 per cent of those surveyed believed she was telling the entire truth on Whitewater. Some 60 per cent thought she was hiding something and 15 per cent thought she was outright lying.

"There's this perception in Washington that when bad news happens, nobody sees Hillary Clinton. But she's on the road all the time. We get more requests for her than we can ever fill," says Neel Lattimore, an aide to Mrs. Clinton.

Former professor charged with Unabomber attacks

SACRAMENTO, California (R) — Two months after he was arrested at his remote Montana cabin, former mathematics Professor Theodore Kaczynski has been charged for the first time with crimes of the Unabomber, a notorious serial bomber.

A federal grand jury in Sacramento, California, handed up a 10-count indictment Tuesday charging Mr. Kaczynski with four bomb attacks between 1985 and 1995 that killed timber industry lobbyist Gilbert Murray and computer store owner Hugh Scrutton and injured two prominent scientists.

The two fatal bombings were in Sacramento, the California state capital, and the two other bombs were mailed from there.

The indictment was handed up on what would have been the 48th birthday of Murray, who was president of the California Forestry Association, Dave Bischoff, the association's current president, said.

"The emotional trauma from the bombing is always going to be with everybody. It's never going to go away," he said.

The charges can carry the death penalty upon conviction, but it is up to Attorney General Janet Reno to decide if the government will seek the death penalty in this case, legal experts said.

Mr. Kaczynski, 54, has been jailed in Montana since his arrest on April 3 on a holding charge of possessing bomb-making materials. The Justice Department said it would move to drop the Montana charge and transfer him to Sacramento for arraignment on the new, more serious charges.

The U.S. attorney for Montana, Sherry Matteucci, said a removal hearing for Mr. Kaczynski will be held soon and he will be transferred to California.

Sharon Telles, a spokeswoman for the

Sacramento County Sheriff's Department, said the department had not been notified whether Mr. Kaczynski would be sent to Sacramento County Main Jail, the only suitable jail in the area.

If he is brought there, Mr. Kaczynski would be put in a cell by himself "because of who he is," she said.

U.S. officials have been saying since Mr. Kaczynski's arrest at his cabin near Lincoln, Montana, that they believe he is the Unabomber, who killed three people and injured 23 during a 17-year bombing spree.

But prosecutors spent months painstakingly building their case and deciding on a venue for a trial before presenting their evidence to a grand jury.

Laurie Levenson, a law professor at Loyola University Law School in Los Angeles, said Sacramento was the backdrop for several of the more recent Unabomber attacks, so the evidence would be fresher there.

She also noted that prosecutors had other Unabomber attacks as possible fall-back charges in the event that a Sacramento jury did not convict Mr. Kaczynski on these charges.

The Justice Department continues to investigate the Unabomber's other fatal attack, against advertising executive Thomas Mosser in New Jersey in 1994.

Justice Department officials maintain they have built a strong case against Mr. Kaczynski after his brother went to the FBI early this year with his suspicions that the Chicago-born Kaczynski might be the elusive bomber.

Among items found in Mr. Kaczynski's cabin were an original copy of the Unabomber's rambling, 35,000-word anti-technology manifesto sent to newspapers last year, a typewriter used to write it, a bomb and a partially completed bomb.



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Should Arab moderates also lose?

EVENTS OF the last three weeks will come to a climax early next week after the Arab leaders held their summit in Cairo (June 21-23) and issue their joint communiqué.

The Arab summit that was called for by the leaders of Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia is expected to be attended by all heads of state except for Iraq which is not being invited. The meeting was prompted by the election of hardline Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Since his election on May 29, Mr. Netanyahu has announced both the programme and the names of his right-wing government and won a 62-vote of confidence in the Israeli Knesset.

The initial Arab reaction to the election of Mr. Netanyahu and the Likud-led right-wing coalition was generally not positive. Leaders of the neighbourhood of Israel held mini-summits in Cairo, Aqaba and Damascus. The 22 or so Arab leaders who are going to converge on Cairo beginning tomorrow and Friday are deeply divided among themselves; some are not even on speaking terms.

The issue in front of the summit is how to respond to the new Israeli government's pronouncements that Israel will not withdraw from the Golan Heights, will not grant the Palestinians more than the autonomy they have got so far, will not allow Palestinian refugees to go back to the West Bank and Gaza and will not negotiate over the status of Jerusalem.

Egypt, which hosts the summit, has a very arduous task to attend to during the conference. For it to regain its leadership role in the Middle East it has to seek to satisfy everyone, the different Arab leaders, the U.S. and Israel.

Syria wants the meeting to come up with a strong statement that would denounce the new Israeli government, rebuke the parties engaged in peace effort and call for a slowdown in the process of normalisation of relations with the Jewish state.

Jordan, which stands to suffer from any reversal or slowdown in the peace-making, does not want a hardline Arab position to push the Israeli government and people further to the right. Resort to hardline or radical positions that might lead to violence will further exacerbate the situation and lead to complications that might reverse the process or lead to the reemergence of now-dead concepts like "Jordan is Palestine."

Meanwhile, the Israeli prime minister who sought to keep hardliners away from key positions in his cabinet has, despite all election rhetoric and the issuance of his government's tough platform, expressed readiness to negotiate with the Arab parties without "pre-conditions," something that is interpreted by some observers as a reassuring gesture to his Arab interlocutors.

It remains to be seen, however, how this crucial Arab conference is going to respond to the change in the Israeli political scene. Wisemen say that they should respond by taking moderate positions that would strengthen the Israeli camp of peace and not weaken it. They recall that it was violence that led to the defeat of Labour's Shimon Peres and the rise of the Likud's Netanyahu. They ask: Where would more tension and violence lead?

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Ra'i demanded that the coming Arab summit avoid all traditional, rhetorical stand and delve directly into the heart of the question of Israel's challenge to the Arab Nation. Ibrahim Al Absi said that in light of the political developments in Israel and the emergence of the Likud Party and its declared policies, the Arab leaders must take a firm stand and show unity in deed rather than in words and take practical steps to counter the Israeli moves at the political and economic, as well as the international levels. Indeed, he said, the new Israeli government's policies represent a real threat to the Arab countries and pose a serious danger to the Palestinian people and their cause. He demanded that the Arabs take steps to ensure that Israel abides by its agreements with Palestine and Jordan and embark on steps to implement the U.N. resolutions. It is true that the Arab Nation is seeking peace, but they are not ready to compromise their legitimate rights and kneel before Netanyahu and the Israeli extremist parties and accept their dictates, stressed the writer.

A WRITER for Al Ra'i daily strongly attacked the new Israeli government led by Benjamin Netanyahu for its declared policy statement in parliament, stressing the Likud Party's policy of non-withdrawal from occupied Arab lands and denying the Palestinians the right to an independent state. Sultan Al Hattab said that with the right-wing parties included in the government, Israel is set to ruin the whole peace process with the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular since their programmes run counter to this process that has been going on under the Labour-led government. He said no Arab country, including Jordan, should accept the assurances of Netanyahu who claims to be keen on pursuing the peace process but in reality is carrying out the right-wing parties' programmes. Neither should Jordan accept the Israeli government's views that priority should now be given to strengthening Israeli-Jordanian and Israeli-Egyptian peace treaties over the essential issue of withdrawal from Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese territories, he added.

The View from Academia

Should we fear the new Israeli government?

By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubah

WHILE SOME in the Arab World have responded soberly to the somewhat unexpected outcome of the recent Israeli elections, which have brought the Likud and other hardliners to power, others have almost been panic-stricken. What we have witnessed during the past couple of weeks, in fact, is something which may best be called Netanyahuphobia. Is such fear, such phobia, justified or not?

The answer is yes and no, but more no than yes. Yes, for a number of reasons. There is, first and most obvious, the outright rejection on part of the Likud of the principle of withdrawal from occupied East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights and the refusal to recognise full Palestinian rights. There is, second, the presence (in the new Israeli cabinet and the Likud and Israel at large) of many undesirable, extremist and quite impossible personalities whose past and present actions compel many among us to worry seriously about the fate of the peace process and to anticipate renewed procrastination tactics, inflexible positions, paralysis of peace talks, and (most likely) eruption of conflict and violence. We know the potential scenario all too well.

The third reason has to do with circumstances and feelings within the Arab World and Arab psyche. When many Arabs fear Netanyahu (and Israel generally) they do so because they have little faith in the Arab Nation's ability to counter and curb his anticipated extremism and intransigence and come up with effective, collective measures to force him to soften his position and adopt a more positive attitude and constructive stand.

Despite the once overt, once covert faith in Arab brotherhood, solidarity, and oneness, many Arabs today have a deep-rooted scepticism about the Arab countries' willingness and ability to work together. Each country, many believe, is fending for itself and catering to its own needs. Some refuse even to look at matters except through a very narrow selfish angle. How do you expect the Arab Nation to work together and come up with effective, collective measures when many of its members are at odds with each other and harbour feelings which border on hatred and animosity? Many in the Arab World feel isolated, abandoned and alone.

But the answer can also be no. One should not exaggerate and expect the worst before it happens. There are strong indications, some believe, that the new Israeli prime minister is ultimately a pragmatist; he will have to be a pragmatist in order to survive. In addition, the so-

called Netanyahu three "nos" are to be viewed within the context of the election campaign. Candidates anytime, anywhere make strong statements and give more promises than they can deliver during election campaigns. As they begin to face daily realities and as their primary concern is to survive and thrive, they begin to be realistic and practical, and their nos become maybes and eventually yeses.

Besides, we have a long experience with Israeli nos. Since the beginning of the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Arab World has generally been naive in interpreting the Israeli nos, viewing them as fixed, absolute answers which may not be altered.

On countless occasions, the Likud and the Labour have said no to so many things and then changed position. The nos, maybes, and yeses are to be viewed within the context of events and within the contexts of political manoeuvres and tactics. They are neither Biblical nor Koranic verses. Netanyahu can say no to withdrawal from East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights and to the restoration of full Palestinian rights, but this does not mean that he will not at some point in the future himself order the withdrawal and oversee the restoration, or be pressured and made to do so. Netanyahu can say whatever he likes at this point, but we must not believe everything he says. In the game of politics, politicians (like people in life) do their best to bluff each other.

If one reads the situation in Israel, in the region and globally correctly, one will have to believe in the inevitability of compromise on the part of the Israeli government (uncompromising though it may sound and look). If it is to survive and thrive, a great deal of pressure is likely to, will likely, be exercised on the new Israeli government to encourage it and compel it to soften its position, both from within and from without.

The new government has won the vote of confidence in the Knesset by 62 votes out of 120. Fifty members have voted no. What this means is that the opposition to the government in Israel itself is going to be immense, and there will be a great deal of pressure on it to try to do things right — out of fear of the Labour and opposition, who will be seizing each and every opportunity to embarrass it and bring it down (notice also the strong tensions within the Likud and the cabinet).

Many in Israel want the peace process to succeed, and these are likely to be more active now. The reason why the Israeli public was not particularly active in pushing

for peace during the past Labour era, we are told, was due to the fact that the Labour government was seen as peace-loving and peace-wanting. If the Likud government tries to procrastinate, paralyse or reverse the peace process, that portion of the Israeli public which believes in peace will be more active.

But pressure can also be exercised from the outside. Israel is in need of the Arab World. Netanyahu himself is fully aware of this. His recent statements about peace with the Arab countries testify to this fact.

The Arab countries hold a strong card in their hands. Even though Arab coordination is not at the level which one desires, there are strong indications that the Arab countries (or a vast majority of them) will coordinate positions and react strongly to any moves on the part of the new Israeli government to stall the peace process. The recent statements by the Qatari foreign minister that Qatar will reconsider and reverse all agreements with Israel if Netanyahu attempts to undermine Israel's commitment to full and comprehensive peace, are strongly indicative of the kind of pressure the Arab countries are willing, and can, exercise. This is something which the new Israeli government has to recognise and reckon with. The forthcoming Arab summit is another strong indication of the ability of the Arab World to put individual differences behind and act speedily.

Potentially, pressure can also come from the U.S. — most probably after the elections. The U.S. government has made it clear that peace is irreversible and that its support to Israel is tied to Israel's willingness to work toward the establishment of peace. America's Arab allies can exercise pressure on the U.S. to pressure the Israeli government if and when the need arises.

Unlike what some may think, I believe that the Arab side has a strong card to play. Progress in Arab-Israeli relations should be used, as made clear by the Qatari statement, to progress in talks about the fate of Jerusalem, the Golan Heights, southern Lebanon and Palestinian rights. I personally do have faith in history and faith in the Arab World's ability to come up with pleasant surprises once in a while. Arabs, like adolescent lovers, break up fast but they also make up fast.

Actually, the one who should be experiencing a great deal of anxiety, fear and even panic at this point, more than anybody else, is Netanyahu himself — for the reasons just cited.

The North Korean famine — and 'they will get away with blackmail'

By Gwynne Dyer

"THEY CAN LIVE until June, or longer, with the food produced last year," explained Kim Hyung-Ki, South Korea's assistant minister for reunification, rejecting any hasty shipments of food to North Korea as unnecessary support for a tottering tyranny. But that was in March. Now it is June, and the 20 million North Koreans may actually be starting to starve.

Even in good years, the world's last Stalinist state ran a nine-tiered food rationing system that gave even privileged citizens only 900 grammes of food a day. North Korea fakes all its statistics to simulate success, but South Korean experts estimate that its grain harvest in normal times is only 4.1 million tonnes, over 2 million tonnes short of its people's needs.

These are not normal times. The steep decline that afflicts older unreformed Communist economies has cut the funds the North Korea regime can spend on importing grain. The political uncertainty that followed Kim Il-Sung's death two years ago means that more money than ever is being lavished on the military (\$6 billion out of a total GNP of \$21 billion, according to South Korean esti-

mates). And then came last year's devastating floods.

Irrigation systems all over North Korea were destroyed and huge areas were covered with sand that has not been cleared because there is no fuel for the bulldozers. There is now only one tier of rationing: a scant 250 grammes per day, which is actually a death sentence for many people if it goes on long enough.

Even in such extreme circumstances, the state's security needs come first. Party leaders and soldiers get plenty to eat; mothers do not. In the politically sensitive capital, Pyongyang, residents' rations are half rice, half corn meal, but in other cities, the ratio is three parts rice to seven parts corn meal. In rural areas it reportedly drops to 2:8 — and the wild herbs and grasses that rural people often eat as a side dish are finished by June.

A few hours' drive from Seoul, where the per capita income is \$10,000 a year, millions of other Koreans are starting to starve, and the only thing that defines their very different fates is a highly artificial (and highly militarised) border. This is not a stable situation.

The South Korean government does not want to help its Communist rival, but in the end South Koreans cannot stand by and watch

North Koreans starve. The North Korean regime knows this perfectly well and is milking it for all it is worth: help us, or millions will starve — and we may well go crazy and attack you.

atic violations of the demilitarised zone that divides the Korean peninsula just 50 km north of Seoul. Since then, there have been half a dozen serious incursions by North Korean forces,

"A few hours' drive from Seoul, where the per capita income is \$10,000 a year, millions of other Koreans are starting to starve, and the only thing that defines their very different fates is a highly artificial (and highly militarised) border. This is not a stable situation."

The South Korean puppets must know that if they regard the North's warning as empty talk and display war hysteria, they will face an irrevocable disaster," warned the North Korean official newspaper, Rodong Sinmun, in April. In classic Communist-speak, where you always accuse your opponent of whatever misdeed you yourself intend to commit, this ranks as a quite serious threat to invade.

It was made in early April, when Pyongyang denounced the 43-year-old armistice and began systematically following congressional approval of a bill aimed at third country citizens investing in Iran and Libya.

"Iran is a power in the region and the world has to deal with it on this basis," said a Tehran-based analyst, who did not want to be named. "There is a tough mood in Iran and trying to isolate it further will only provoke renewed Islamic militancy and the idea of 'what have we gained by appeasing the West'."

He said U.S. and European charges against Iran were part of "the historic misunderstanding since the revolution. 'They will keep resurfacing from time to time until the West understands that Iran will not give up its Islamic revolution and support to other Islamic causes,' he said.

The analysts and diplomats said however new public attacks by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) — Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates — added a fresh dimension to the Western campaign against Iran.

April, by proposing four-point talks "as soon as possible and without preconditions, to initiate a process aimed at achieving a permanent peace settlement."

China also accepted the proposal in principle in late April — but North Korea insists as always that the South Korean government is a mere puppet and that peace talks can only take place between Pyongyang and Washington. Kim Jong-Il (or whoever is really running North Korea these days) clearly believes that when famine strikes, his opponents will offer help without any need for concessions.

A month ago, China sent North Korea 20,000 tonnes of grain, but that barely covers a week's consumption. Seoul is still holding fast: "If North Korea diverted just 3 per cent out of its spending for military purposes, there would be no problem (in buying enough grain abroad)," says assistant minister Kim Hyung-Ki. But Trevor Page of the U.N. World Food Programme recently described the food situation in North Korean cities as "appalling."

If nobody changes their position, there will be large numbers of deaths in North Korea before the new harvest temporarily eases the situation in October or

November. So who is going to give way?

The likely answer is Seoul and Washington. The North Korean regime is probably still firmly enough in control to let its people starve without facing revolt. Whereas democratic governments with free media cannot defy their own domestic popular opinion and go on withholding food aid from North Korea once that starts to happen.

Moreover, while most South Koreans assume that the Communist regime will collapse fairly soon, they do not yet feel ready for the task of rescuing their northern compatriots.

The gap between South and North Korean living standards is far wider than that between the former Germanies, and South Koreans only outnumber North Koreans two-to-one, compared to a three-to-one ratio between West and East Germans. Given how hard and expensive it has been to reunite the Germanies, the South Koreans would like one more democratic election and a few more years of rapid economic growth before they embark on a similar but bigger enterprise.

So the North Koreans are probably going to get away with their blackmail.

Iran appears more isolated by U.S., Gulf neighbours

By Diana Abdallah Reuter

DUBAI — Iran appears more isolated by U.S. economic pressure and unprecedented public accusations by its Arab neighbours, long suspicious of its Islamic revolution.

But analysts say the more the world tries to isolate Iran the more radical it will become.

Western diplomats say a war of words between Iran and its Gulf Arab neighbours as well as U.S. and European accusations it was sponsoring terrorism and trying to sabotage the Middle East peace process were heightening tension in the volatile region.

But they ruled out any armed confrontation in a region bristling with some of the world's most sophisti-

cated weapons and producing around a third of the world's crude oil needs.

"We are concerned about any Iranian attempts to destabilise the Gulf and this has been a long-standing matter," one Western diplomat said. "We know Iran is behind attempts to disrupt the peace process."

"Iran keeps saying it wants normal relations with the West. We say these are our objections. You want normal relations, then address these objections," another Western diplomat said.

Iran denied charges by the state of Bahrain that it masterminded a plot to topple the government by force, rejected charges it was a threat to the security of the region and said the only threat was the presence of U.S. Forces in the Gulf.

It said it was opposed to peace talks between the Arabs and Israel but was not supporting Islamic militants in Lebanon and occupied territories to sabotage the process.

President Akbar Hasbemi Rafsanjani said Saturday the more pressure was exerted on Iran "the more strongly the people will defend the achievements of the Islamic revolution."

Tehran Times daily said Wednesday the West had always created an "evil empire" as an "all-purpose ghost" to frighten Arabs, Israelis, and the West itself. "As a cure, they sell arms to Arabs, Israelis or anyone who buys the theory that 'if you don't watch out, Iran will attack you'," it said.

U.S. firms were banned from dealing with Iran in 1995. More sanctions are

likely following congressional approval of a bill aimed at third country citizens investing in Iran and Libya.

"Iran is a power in the region and the world has to deal with it on this basis," said a Tehran-based analyst, who did not want to be named. "There is a tough mood in Iran and trying to isolate it further will only provoke renewed Islamic militancy and the idea of 'what have we gained by appeasing the West'."

He said U.S. and European charges against Iran were part of "the historic misunderstanding since the revolution. 'They will keep resurfacing from time to time until the West understands that Iran will not give up its Islamic revolution and support to other Islamic causes,' he said.

The analysts and diplomats said however new public attacks by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) — Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates — added a fresh dimension to the Western campaign against Iran.

"The Gulf states never wanted confrontation with Iran even when warned Iran is a threat. They constantly said 'we have to live with Iran. It is our neighbour,'" one diplomat said. "But now they seem to have had enough."

The GCC states earlier this month, in the first such strong statement since Iran's revolution in 1979, said the Islamic republic was interfering in their internal affairs and threatening the security of the region by its

arms purchases.

They had always been suspicious of the revolution, but had so far resisted pressure by Washington, insisting they wanted to preserve stability and not provoke tension in a region where economic prosperity is a government priority.

Washington had lobbied hard for support of its anti-Iran policy among its Gulf allies, constantly warned them of the threat Iran posed and urged them to build up their defences.

After disputes with the UAE over three disputed Gulf islands, and constant rows with Saudi Arabia over oil policies and political rallies at the annual pilgrimage, diplomats said Iran's alleged role in the plot in Bahrain was the last straw for the GCC.

New animated film offers cathedral-size challenges

By John Horn
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Kids inevitably drag their parents to Disney's animated films. Will parents now haul their kids to The Hunchback Of Notre Dame?

The newest installment in Hollywood's most popular movie franchise, Hunchback is by far the most "adult" animated musical since 1991's best picture-nominated Beauty And The Beast. A sporadically menacing film touching on some of the troublesome themes raised in Victor Hugo's 1831 novel, Hunchback will test the formidable Disney marketing machine.

The studio has at least one glittering twist on the dark classic working in its favor: In Disney's version, opening June 21, Quasimodo and Esmeralda don't die after all.

Entertainment analyst projections and early toy store sales indicate the movie and its related merchandise — including hand puppets, a lavish Disneyland stage show and The Hunchback Of Notre Dame Topsy Turvy computer game — could surpass the highly profitable Pocahontas and its lot.

Others are skeptical. Neil Source, an online research service for movie exhibitors, says the film's "prospects seem limited," and the film may not appeal to very young children.

Jeld against the huggable Simba from The Lion King and the slinky titl character of Pocahontas, the stars of The Hunchback Of Notre Dame are both more complicated and less approachable.

From early sketches where he looked no

worse than "some kid having a bad hair day," Quasimodo (voiced by Tom Hulce) evolved into a tormented, potentially frightening bell-ringer. In early screenings at least, his appearance — and public humiliation — has sent some fearful 4-year-olds bolting for the lobby. The film's villain, Judge Claude Frollo, is an animated musical's equivalent of a child abuser. And while Quasimodo doesn't die, he also doesn't turn into a beautiful prince and get the girl.

"I think it has plenty in it for kids to enjoy," says Kirk Wise, who co-directed the film with Gary Trousdale. "But when we are looking at these stories, we are looking for things that we would enjoy. Hugo's novel is very dark. We wanted to stay true to the drama and emotion but add elements of fun and humor."

The film's most conspicuous pitch for children is delivered by talking, wisecracking gargoyles named Victor, Hugo and Laverne. In the tradition of animated leading women, the take-no-gruff Esmeralda (voiced by Demi Moore) is so curvaceous it looks like the only time she leaves aerobics class is for breast enlargement surgery.

Hulce, who toyed around with several Quasimodo voices, finally settled on a form of speech that makes the character sound like a hashful young man.

When he was first asked to audition for the leading vocal role, Hulce said Quasimodo's animation was "much less monstrous — I was surprised how tame he was," just a "bad-hair" teen. Along the way, says Wise, Quasimodo's drawn-demea-

nour ranged from "very frightening" to so enchanting "he looked like one of the seven dwarves."

Just as the filmmakers walked a narrow path between tragedy and comedy, fright and compassion, Hulce struggled to bring Quasimodo to life. "It was a process of hunt-and-peck," Hulce says. "How bold is he willing to be? How devastating is the abuse he has undergone?"

Wise and Trousdale decided their leading man essentially was a 19th century translation of the most unpopular kid in a 20th century elementary school.

"I think everybody at some time in their life has felt like Quasimodo," Wise says. "Children are keenly aware of what it's like to be left out. So kids immediately warm up to him."

Thanks to increasingly sophisticated computer animation programmes, The Hunchback Of Notre Dame features several dazzling scenes of lifelike crowds, realistic content and luminous sunlight streaming through stained-glass windows.

For all its artistic beauty, however, Hunchback will be judged by a very simple yardstick: Does the story work for a broad audience?

"It's a little more sophisticated subject matter," says Don Hahn, the film's producer, who has not yet decided if he will take his 5-year-old daughter. "It's a very personal decision" about how young is too young, he says.

"Ever since Snow White, Disney has been accused of scaring children," says Wise. "But as adults, those scared children look back (at those scary movies) as great memories of childhood."

Made into a major U.S. live-action film four times previously, The Hunchback Of Notre Dame is far more than a story of a hideously deformed man living in the shadows of a French cathedral.

"It's a very serious book

— it deals with political and historical issues in a very serious way," says Victor Brombert, a professor of comparative literature at Princeton University and a renowned Hugo authority.

Despite its relatively challenging narrative, Disney's Hunchback abandons Hugo's tragic ending, in which the gyp-sy Esmeralda is hung and Quasimodo joins her in the tomb.

Since The Lion King was an original work, there was no criticising its "authenticity." Pocahontas took broad liberties with the historical forebear, but without significant backlash. Hunchback, whose story is known by many, may not escape so lightly.

As for the Disney up-date, "I must confess I'm resisting this one a little bit," Brombert says. "It seems so far removed and sentimental."

A few literary authorities concur.

"Not too long ago, Hollywood was capable of telling stories with sad endings, such as Cyrano and Dark Victory," says Mark Crispin Miller, chair of the writing programme at Johns Hopkins University. "The corporate need for immediate success on a grand scale has made it impossible to tell stories that don't leave people laughing and applauding."

"It's really sad and troubling because it rules out a lot of stories — a lot of stories can't be told."

Co-director Trousdale notes that Disney is in the entertainment business — not literary preservation. People have complained about Disney's adaptations of other classics, he says.

"Working with a French national treasure has its pitfalls," Trousdale says. "You have to be careful you don't alter it too much, don't run too roughshod over it."

As for the new hatch-of-naysayers, Trousdale says, "They can go have a drink with the Lewis Carroll purists, the Rudyard Kipling purists and the Hans Christian Andersen purists."



Quasimodo, the reclusive bell ringer of Notre Dame (right) meets Esmeralda, a gipsy dancer, as Gargoyles — Victor, Hugo and Laverne — look on in a scene from Walt Disney Pictures' new musical animated film The Hunchback Of Notre Dame (Reuter photo)



Quasimodo joins the 'Feast of Fools' celebration as he is crowned king by Master of Ceremonies Clopin (left) as Esmeralda and Judge Frollo (right) look on in a scene from the animated film The Hunchback Of Notre Dame (Reuter photo)

EU seeks to end trade in East European women

By Janet McEvoy
Reuters

BRUSSELS — Marzena and Krystyna are two Polish women. They were promised rich lives as dancers in Belgium, but were forced to work as prostitutes and spent their time on display in a brothel window.

Regardless of whether they worked or not, they had to pay their pimp 12,000 francs (\$300) a day in rent. If trade was brisk they would earn another 3,000 (\$100) for themselves.

"They thought they were to work in cabarets. They had to sit in the window if they did not exist in Poland," said Johan Vangenechten, who works at a shelter for the victims of trafficking in women in Brussels.

Marzena and Krystyna, aged 19 and 22, are just two victims of a growing trade in women brought from Eastern Europe to the West to work as prostitutes which will be the subject of a special European Union conference in Vienna next week (Jun 10-11).

With the fall of communism, women from countries like Ukraine, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Lithuania have provided a cheaper and more replaceable supply of prostitutes for criminally cashing in on the lucrative trade.

"Before 1992 we saw that most of the women came from Asia, Africa, South America, and now that 75 per cent of our clients are coming from Eastern Europe. That happened after the fall of the Berlin Wall," said Ineke Van Der Wolff, director of the Dutch foundation against trafficking in women in Utrecht.

Belgium and the Netherlands are the only two countries which have passed new legislation which allows women brought into the country illegally to remain to decide whether to testify and then give evidence, instead of being deported as criminals.

In the case of Cristina and Pascale they cannot be fully identified for fear of reprisals — they benefited from the new system and five men were convicted. But they are only the tip of the iceberg. Most women are simply too afraid to come forward.

The European Union's (EU) Justice Commissioner Anita Gradin, who convened a recent conference, said it is impossible to know exactly how many women are involved in the trade.

The Geneva-based International Organisation for Migration (IOM) says that if solutions have been hard to find it is because the trafficking problem is little understood and becoming ever more complex because the mechanics of trafficking are elusive.

All agree the 15-nation EU has an enormous political problem at hand, as it prepares to enlarge to Eastern

Europe.

Grazyna, 30, who went to the foundation in the Netherlands for help, is also Polish and lost her job in a shipyard in Gdansk after the fall of communism. Then she got divorced.

She met Johan G. at a party and he said he had a friend, Robert, who had a job for her in a restaurant in Germany.

"At the border I had to hand over my passport to Robert. I didn't know why. It all seemed like a holiday then," she said in testimony to the Dutch foundation.

"Jozef is waiting for us. I am sold to him. I don't even know for how much. Like a cow. Without delay Jozef takes me to Holland by car. An Audi. Together with Mona and Maria, two other women, I'm put behind a window..."

"Jozef is always in the room behind me...I have to make 600 guilders (\$350) a day. If I don't Jozef will kick me. In my belly, my breasts. Never in my face...This is not how I imagined living in the West."

Since the foundation was set up nine years ago it has helped 800 women and had 168 clients last year. The Brussels shelter, named Pag-Asa, dealt with 30 people in its first year. There are also shelters in the Belgian towns Antwerp and Liege.

Van Der Wolff said that of the few women the centre manages to get in touch with only half decide to file a complaint, and only a few trials result in conviction.

The Belgian and Dutch experience has also shown that the police, ill-informed about the new laws and set in their ways, continue to treat the women as criminals rather than victims.

"The most important problem is that at first they see the women as illegal immigrants. The rule is that illegal women, you have to send them directly to the airport," said Van Der Wolff.

"Sometimes they don't consider the person to be a victim," said Vangenechten, adding that victims of the trafficking were often in shock and suffered medical problems as a result of their ordeal.

Van Der Wolff underlined the need for an international solution, involving the Eastern European countries themselves, at the conference.

"It's very important that the solution for trafficking in women is an international one and not just on the domestic level," she said.

Some experts fear progress at the conference could be hindered if some countries, notably France and Italy, see the occasion as a chance to crack down on prostitution in general, rather than forced prostitution.

Even before deciding on how to tackle the problem EU governments will first have to agree a common definition of what trafficking actually is.

Scenes painted with words

Freya Stark in the Levant (Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Palestine)

By Malise Ruthven

120 pages, black and white photographs, Garnet Publishing London, 1994.

£20 in the U.K. JD 22 in Jordan.

IT WAS the writings of Freya Stark and Wilfred Thesiger which first inspired me to come to the Middle East. "Orientalist" admissions maybe, but both travellers conveyed with vivid clarity the people and countries they encountered: A heady pull for a girl of eighteen. This recent publication is a wonderful complement to the scenes painted with words.

Freya Stark in the Levant is a collection of Freya Stark's photographs, the majority of which have never been printed, and which are now in the archive of St. Antony's College Middle East Centre at Oxford University. The photographs represent Lebanon, Syria, Jordan and Palestine and the book is one of a series which contain photographs from other regions of the world she visited. The sample has been chosen by Malise Ruthven, who is a writer, journalist and godson of Dame Freya Stark. He intersperses the photographs with text taken from letters and books and com-

FREYA STARK



MALISE RUTHVEN

BOOK REVIEW

mands of new hotels, it is interesting to see the Thomas Cook tented hotel camp of 1933 and reflect on the beginnings and process of tourism. Similar feelings arise when looking at the Wadi Rum Police Post in 1961 — standing solitary in the desert.

Freya Stark in the Levant provides hith a complement to her own hooks and stands on its own right as a glimpse into the life and char-

Reviewed by Dr. Alison McQuitty, director, British Institute at Amman for Archaeology and History

Slow Highways

By Jean-Claude Elias

COMPUTER LITERATURE often keeps us dreaming about the future of information technology. Ultra powerful systems that fit in a wrist watch, infrared communications and data storage that will allow us to hold complete libraries in the palm of our hand and easily exchange them with others are but examples of dreams that will probably come true one day.

While our mind may understand the technological principles that would produce such wonders, real life limitations that will delay or prevent them happening cannot be ignored.

A simple sentence in June's issue of American PC Magazine recently brought my mind from technology's seventh skies, where it was lost in a kaleidoscopic technofiction dream, down to earth. It read: "With content on the Internet erupting from plain text to dazzling multimedia, your 28,800 hps modem is bound to feel uncomfortably slow. Plain old telephone lines may have hit their peak." The author was naturally talking about the telephone network in the USA.

The speed of data transmission over a computer network or from computer to computer, via modems, is expressed in bits per seconds or hps. The writer is saying that modems with 28,800 hps become very slow now that huge amounts of data are being moved, shuttled, manipulated over the Internet. Users need faster modems.

Apparently innocent, the above statement is terrifying. Computer users in Jordan who PCs are fitted with modems know that by current standards, 28,000 hps is considered an extremely fast rate. It is usually so fast that the infrastructure of the Kingdom's network cannot cope with it.

Most computer communications in the country are carried at speeds varying from 2,400 hps in the worst case up to 14,400 in the best. We, users in Jordan, are still dreaming of working at 28,800. Modems that operate at the higher rate are being sold here but the fastest setting that can be used is 14,400. Depending on the quality of the



telephone lines in your area, you may have to operate at even lower speeds.

What should we think? The Americans find 28,800 too slow while we're working at half, or less than this rate.

At a certain point almost every technological advancement becomes dependent on a country's basic infrastructure. What good would it do for a rich person to acquire a Ferrari car if the roads in his or her country are not suitable for such a sophisticated sport machine? Buying exclusive technology that one cannot benefit from, use adequately or simply maintain is a contradiction.

There is often an offset between a country's structures and the new techniques that it can import from other countries. The only way to bridge the gap is to improve the general structures.

The very complaint of the above cited writer is somewhat exaggerated and not really justified.

Statistics indicate that in the USA the percentage of those who use fast modems is less than 10 per cent of the total number of Internet subscribers. Therefore PC users in Jordan shouldn't have the impression of living in the Stone Age.

Our country's telephone network can be considered as modern and good. However, given the need for faster and more reliable computer communications, one just wishes to see this network take one or two steps ahead as soon as possible. I'll postpone my purchase of a faster modem till then.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

BY MOHAMMAD A. SHUQUAH



TEST YOUR MEMORY

Have a quick look at this picture and then decide whether the statements given below are true or false.

SCORES

- 10-12 Excellent
- 8-9 Very Good
- 7 Fair
- 5-6 Lacking Concentration

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

- Where do you live? Ayna taskon?
- In Jabal Amman, 3rd Circle. Fee Jabal Amman, al-dowwar ath-thaleth.
- Are you living in a villa or an apartment? Hal taskon fee villa am fee shaqqa?
- I'm looking for a suitable apartment. Enni ab'bath an shaqqa munasiba.
- Can't you help me find a new one? Ala tusa'idoni fil balth an shaqqa jadida?
- Most willingly. There is a good selection of houses at reasonable rates. Bikolli-r-tah. Toojad majmo'a jayyeda minal man-azil be'as'ar ma'qula.
- Are the rents high or low? Murtafa'a qalilan.
- Have I got to pay the agent any fee? Hal yajib an adfa' lis-simsar ofrah?
- Yes, the landlord also does. Na'am, wakathalika yaf'al al-malik.
- How many rooms do you need? Kam ghufatan talzamoka?
- 3 bedrooms, a reception, a bath and a kitchen. Thalath ghuraf, wa-bujratustiqbal, wamahammam wamatbakh.
- Is the house equipped with central heating? Hal al-manzil muzawwad bitadfe'a markaziya?
- Yes, there is also an electric lift and a garage. Na'am, yoojad aydan miss'ad kahraba'e wa-karaj.

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

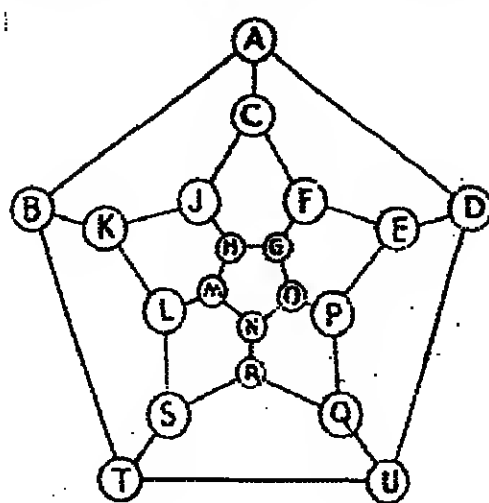
1. What is the difference between — glare, glair and galore?

- In the picture, there are five men.
- Only two fire engines are operating.
- One of the policemen is wearing a scarf.
- A reporter is talking to a police officer.
- A door of a fire engine is left open.
- An injured person is carried on a stretcher.
- A textile factory is on fire.
- A driver is seen sitting behind his steering wheel.
- One of the firemen is climbing a ladder.
- A police car has got the number 505.
- Three hoses are used for putting out the fire.
- There firemen are wearing caps.

PUZZLES

SUBURBAN RAILWAY SYSTEM

THE DIAGRAM represents the suburban electrified railway of an unnamed city. It has twenty stations. Can you find a route that, starting from any one station, will pass through every other station once and once only, and bring you back to that from which you started?



The end of an era

By Samer Ghaleb Bagaeen

OUT OF naivete, or even out of innocence, I had thought when I started writing this column for the newspaper that I would be able to bring about some kind of change, however negligible, I had known that I would not be able to trigger real change but I had at least hoped for a change in the way people perceive and react to things, events and other people.

I am now slowly coming to the conviction that even this negligible change is quite unattainable in light of the present predicaments we are facing, be they social, cultural, economic or political. One can safely say that all four are besieged by some kind of uncertainty that is continuously being reflected in the way we do and think about, again, things, events and people. And this uncertainty goes a long way to explain the way we behave as a people.

All this has to do with a carelessness which in itself has to do with our development situation. This is to say that because we are at the receiving end of technology, we initially grab at whatever comes our way with the same speed and excitement with which we let go when the next big thing comes around.

An example of this can be that of the new restaurants that are popping up all over Amman. Here it is important to emphasize that this is happening 'in Amman' because there remains a lifestyle outside our capital city that relates far more to who we are than those activities which take place amongst the glittering lights of our capital city.

Anyway, back to this business of the restaurants. Because we have had so many new such places open lately, we have witnessed a transfer of that certain "crowd" of people from one such place to the next, easily defined as that where hip people go and where one of the latest novelties is a "restaurant membership."

One can easily guess that the next such place will be where now stands the yellow and red logo of McDonalds. A place which is already making its presence felt with a looming steel structure. A place which remains a mere fast food restaurant that we have successfully managed to live without for so long but which will probably come to mean to some households what such things as The Bold and The Beautiful have come to mean — the essence of life itself. Again, until the next big thing comes around. This, in turn, could be the much hyped Hard Rock Cafe, Amman which the "in" crowd is already signalling for greatness.

Meanwhile, amidst all of this nonsense about a sort of culture that is as changeable as opinions, attitudes, and the design of the latest cap or car, any attempt at indulging in a series of conversation or even indulging in some serious writing is a mere exercise in futility. It is an exercise in futility because at this moment in time, nobody is willing to either listen or learn. Not even those who have the power to change the way people think about or perceive things — the media. Instead of focusing on the real issues that have to do with our society, our culture and our economy, our newspapers are only too keen on publishing scandals.

And here it is the same old story all over again — Until the next scandal comes along. So, because of a lack of commitment to be thorough, a newspaper would publish, say an important story, one day, and then forget all about it the next.

The papers are also full of reports on events that seem to require, either invitations, or that a person be so and so.



Such gatherings bear little relationship to what a person does or tries to do and only seek to emphasize what a person is, thinks he or she is or what others perceive him to be. Scenarios such as these are nearly always based on relationships which can only be mutually beneficial.

Take for example the much publicised British Week. Certainly no one has bothered to invite the Jordanian graduates of British universities who are now back in Amman because apparently, someone had thought that they would have nothing to contribute to the event.

In any case, if we can assume that spending a few years in another country cannot teach a person anything about the culture of that country, what then is the purpose of cultural exchange? Those who undertake such tasks might just as well be either tourists or simply passersby. And maybe the accepted doctrine is that they are: "Let us take their money, send them back to where they came from, and forget all about it."

But because this cannot be true, there has to be something not quite right about the way that we treat one another. But again, this also is not entirely true because according to the norms we employ, "you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours," we are behaving in a manner that is quite consistent with the way our society has developed and has taught us to behave towards others. I mean let's face it, the one thing that we as human beings are so good at is forgetting. Forgetting how much other people have been good to us and how much they have come to mean to us.

In spite of all this, we are lucky in that we can take a look at certain countries in the world and see what can become of us if we keep going down the road we have; willingly or unwillingly, chosen. And it is a road that we have chosen partly out of carelessness and partly due to our own selfishness and unwillingness to learn from either our mistakes or from others who have already been through what we are now going through.

For if a culture exemplified by kids doing drugs, by children being abused, by people becoming permanently unemployed because of a lack of retraining courses and by an utter disrespect for the environment and one another, such a culture cannot wake us up from the state we are in then not even all the seminars, gatherings and summits of the world will help us to formulate and implement the solutions that will make our own distinct lifestyle come into existence.

And maintaining this state of idleness can only leave us knocking on the gates of oblivion, in itself, the clearest sign of the end of an era.

Only one more thing remains: A question to be answered. Are we brave enough to face up to our responsibilities towards ourselves and towards others, or has that time not come yet?

The search for answers can only continue.

JTV CHANNEL TWO WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, June 20, 1996

- 3:00 Double Dragon (Cartoon)
- 3:30 NBA
- 4:30 Pirates (Documentary)
- 5:01 French Programmes — Les Polluado
- 5:30 Varieties — Le Monde Est A Vous
- 7:00 Le Journal
- 7:15 Archimede
- 7:35 Carol & Company
- 8:00 Taratata
- 9:10 Star Trek
- 10:00 News In English
- 10:25 Movie — Coach Of The Year
- 12:00 Family Matters — Comedy

- 7:00 Le Journal
- 7:15 Magazine — Sports et Musique
- 7:30 News Headlines
- 7:35 Cinema, Cinema
- 8:00 American Chart Show
- 8:45 The Fresh Prince Of Bel-Air
- 9:10 Black's Magic
- 10:00 News In English
- 10:25 Counterstrike
- 11:15 Short Story Cinema
- 11:50 Nelson's Column

Monday, June 24, 1996

Friday, June 21, 1996

- 3:00 Iris, the Happy Professor
- 3:15 Pebbles And Bamm Bamm Show
- 3:45 Bush School
- 3:55 See How They Grow
- 4:10 The Crystal Maze
- 5:01 French Programmes — Les Polluado
- 5:30 Film — Diva
- 7:00 Le Journal
- 7:30 Magazine — Allo La Jerre
- 7:35 Growing Pains
- 8:00 Nasty Boys
- 8:45 It had to be you
- 9:10 The Wanderer
- 10:00 News In English
- 10:25 The Country Girl — Oscar Winner 1954
- 12:00 Musical Programme

- 3:00 Bonkers
- 3:30 Richie Rich
- 4:00 Animals Of The Mediterranean
- 5:01 French Programme — Ordy
- 5:15 Family Programme — L'Ecole Des Fans
- 6:00 Magazine — Thalassa
- 7:00 Le Journal
- 7:15 Magazine — Science — Cinq Sur Cinq
- 7:35 The Nanny
- 8:25 Rock Around The World
- 9:10 100 Years Of Capitalism In Koda
- 10:00 News In English
- 10:25 The Bold And The Beautiful
- 11:10 Hawaii 5-0
- 12:00 Matlock

Tuesday, June 25, 1996

Saturday, June 22, 1996

- 3:00 Moomin
- 3:30 Pumpkin Patch
- 4:00 Blue Heelers
- 4:40 Big Brother Jake
- 5:01 French Programme — Ordy
- 5:15 Document — La Vie D'avant Moi
- 5:30 Game show
- 6:00 Serie — Chateau Vallon
- 7:00 Le Journal
- 7:15 Magazine — Faut Pas Rever
- 7:35 The Torkelsons
- 8:00 Alhum Show
- 8:55 Our planet, our earth
- 9:10 Miami Vice
- 10:00 News In English
- 10:25 The Bold And The Beautiful
- 11:10 Movie — A Hazard Of Hearts
- Starring: Diana Rigg & Edward Fox

- 3:00 Iris The Happy Professor
- 3:30 Captain Planet
- 3:45 The Bob Morrison Show
- 4:35 Alf
- 5:01 French Programme — Ordy
- 5:15 Document — La Vie D'avant Moi
- 5:30 Game Show — Que Le Meilleur Gagne
- 6:00 Medical Magazine — Savoir Pas Sante
- 7:00 Le Journal
- 7:15 Magazine
- 7:35 Encounter
- 8:00 Blossom
- 8:25 Deep Probe Expeditions
- 9:10 Star Trek
- 10:00 News In English
- 10:25 Movie — For The Love Of Agon
- Starring: Meredith Baxter & Mathew Walker
- My Two Wives

Wednesday, June 26, 1996

Sunday, June 23, 1996

- 3:05 The Mask
- 3:30 Mac & Muley
- 4:00 The Nature Of Thing
- 5:00 Ordy
- 5:15 La Vie D'avant Moi
- 5:30 Game Show
- 6:00 Envoye Special

- 3:00 Iris
- 3:30 The Flintstones
- 3:50 Bill Nye, The Science Guy
- 4:20 Kelly
- 5:01 French Programme — Les Polluado
- 5:30 Serie — Secret De Famille
- 7:00 Le Journal
- 7:15 Magazine — Sports Et Musique
- 8:10 Changer
- 9:10 Hunter
- 10:00 News In English
- 10:25 The Bold And The Beautiful
- 11:10 Airwolf

China's 'little emperors' dominate food industries, government policy

By Asher Bolande
Agence France Presse

HONG KONG — The appetites of China's millions of "little emperors" — the much-indulged products of Beijing's one-child policy — have become an unparalleled focus of attention for food industries and the government.

According to anthropologists gathered at an international conference here on China's "changing diet and food ways," children have come to dominate families' discretionary spending, an opportunity fast-food chains and "children's food" makers have pounced on.

"China's birth-control policies, especially the one-child policy, has meant that children are doted on even more by parents and grandparents, sometimes to irrational extents," said Guo Yuhua, a researcher with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences.

"There is a clear trend toward child-centered families," she said, citing survey research on food spending in Beijing and rural Jiangsu province.

But there is more at issue than simple over-indulgence, said Jing Jun, a City University of New York faculty member.

Increasingly, for the four grandparents and two parents, the single offspring is not only the focus of affection but fervent hopes for future economic welfare.

It has become a worthwhile investment to spend lavishly on baby food and children's food — expensive, health-oriented commodities unknown in China until recent years, he said.

Mr. Jing said baby-food giants like U.S.-based Heinz and Swiss-based Nestle have aggressively promoted their products in China, focusing on the modern sophistication their foreign brand-names project.

"Not surprisingly, the Heinz (television) commercials not only picture plump, smiling Chinese babies but offer a quick spiel on vitamins and minerals in scientific jargon to assure viewers of the highest nutrition," Mr. Jing said.

In an era when the Chinese state is dismantling its Communist-style universal welfare system, the age-old view that "what you feed (a son) is what he feeds you in the future" has taken on renewed meaning.

The fact is not lost on the Chinese government, Mr. Jing said. After restricting families to one child, Beijing aimed to assure the health of those

children in a corresponding fashion, he said.

In 1981 — two years after the one-child policy emerged — the sixth five-year plan established the children's food industry as a non-profit state sector, ostensibly to guarantee nutritional quality imperatives.

But commercialisation took hold in the mid-eighties, as foreign joint ventures began to participate in the market. Now, the state is attempting to shift its role in the highly profitable sector from a supplier to a concerned regulator, Mr. Jing said.

Zhao Yang, an official with the State Council Research Centre for rural development, told AFP the government has formulated safety and nutritional rules on children's food that are waiting to be codified into law.

Requirements covering standards of material input are being expanded and clarified, for example.

But he said rules are difficult to formulate, as many domestically made health tonics sold for infants and children have Chinese herbal-medicine ingredients, the properties of which are not well-researched in laboratories.

Popular inexpensive tonics, such as Wa Ha Ha (baby smile), are getting special official attention because they are sometimes used as food substitutes for children, particularly in rural areas, he said.

Mr. Zhao also acknowledged that unscrupulously made imitations of approved brand-name products, a persistent problem in China, pose a health danger.

Whether the government is prepared to face down the growing fast-food industry in China in the name of children's health is another question.

Eriberto Lozada, a Harvard University faculty anthropologist, said global business giants like Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) and McDonald's have strategically — and successfully — targeted children to attract Chinese consumers.

In a Beijing study, he said parents' stated reason for going to KFC, was their child's preference, heightened by child-oriented decoration, cartoon characters, furniture design, play areas and toy give-aways.

"Children have become consumers in their own right," Mr. Lozada said.

U.K. becoming a nation of wheezers

LONDON (AFP) — Britain is becoming a nation of wheezers with almost half the population experiencing asthmatic symptoms by the time they are 33, according to new research.

A study of more than 18,000 people born in March 1958 suggests that a fifth of Britons have had asthma or a wheeze by the age of seven, a quarter by 16 and almost a half by 33, the British Medical Journal reported.

Responding to the findings, the British Lung Foundation said that while Britain was becoming increasingly affected by wheezing illness, research in this area had been "critically ignored."

Doctors from Saint George's Hospital, London, based results on five interviews with the study subjects conducted at intervals as they grew up. They were asked questions about illnesses, their lifestyle and social background.

The analysis showed that wheezing

in childhood was linked with pneumonia, hay fever and eczema. But asthmatic symptoms in early adulthood were most strongly linked with smoking.

Smoking also increased the risk of childhood asthma recurring in adulthood, but did not account for all the increased risk.

David Strachan and colleagues at the hospital who carried out the research wrote in the British Medical Journal: "Our estimates of incidence, particularly in early childhood, are likely to be conservative."

"At least two-thirds of children who develop wheezing by the age of 16 do so before they are five-years-old, and many experience their first attack in infancy."

"Abnormalities in lung function are detectable before the onset of asthmatic symptoms. Some casual agents must therefore act very early in life, possibly before birth," they wrote.

However the influence of maternal smoking on the incidence of wheezing in early childhood was "weak and inconsistent" in contrast to the findings of several other studies.

Smoking was a "powerful and potentially avoidable risk factor" for wheezing starting in adult life.

The study showed that even after a disease-free interval of seven years or more, subjects with a history of asthmatic symptoms in childhood retained a risk of wheezing later in life above that of their healthy peers.

Ian Goward, chief executive of the British Lung Foundation, said: "Britain is becoming more and more affected by wheezing illness, yet research into this area has been critically ignored."

"New data shows that lung disease receives only a very small share of the medical research cake compared with other areas," he added.

Studies exonerate air pollution as cause of asthma

By Maggie Fox
Reuters

LONDON — Doctors said they had cleared air pollution as a cause of a worldwide increase in asthma cases and the problem might instead start in infancy or even before birth.

Smoking, diet and living in houses that were too clean and sealed off from the outside world were all important factors that needed to be studied more, experts told a conference on asthma in London.

Stephen Holgate, a medical professor at the University of Southampton and conference chairman, said two studies seemed to clear pollution of blame.

"Air pollution has dropped dramatically since the 1950s...and that has been associated with an upward trend in asthma," he said.

Pollution now came from vehicle exhausts rather than coal fires but even places with little air pollution, such as the Shetland Isles, had seen increases in asthma.

Ann Woolcock, a medical professor at the University of Sydney, said air pollution clearly aggravated asthma in people who had the condition but this did not mean it was the underlying cause.

Asthma, an abnormal reaction of the immune system, causes the airways to become irritated, sometimes to the point where they swell almost shut. If untreated, it can kill.

"Every single study has shown an increase," Prof. Woolcock said. "And the studies are from all over the world."

The experts said it was important to find out what caused the changes in the immune system which, once there, seemed to be permanent. The second step was to find the best way to avoid triggering attacks in patients.

Indoor pollution was a likely cause and trigger. Study after study had shown that children living in tightly sealed homes, with carpeting that harbored dust mites, were especially prone to asthma.

Allergy to dust mites is strongly

implicated in asthma.

"I think it makes sense to have children out of doors," Prof. Woolcock said. More exercise, less television and less junk food would all probably help, she said.

Food was probably an important factor, doctors told the conference, but they said more research was needed.

"It's premature to tell the public what to eat to avoid asthma," said Scott Weiss of the Harvard University Medical School. "There's a sense of 'if I just eat this food, I won't get asthma' and we are not at this level yet."

Dr. Weiss said studies he had conducted had found Vitamin C seemed important. It could prevent inflammation of the airways and strengthen the immune system, he said.

There was also a role for Omega-3 and Omega-6 fatty acids, found in flaxseed oil, soy oil and fish oil.

"Clearly in Western society we eat way too much animal fat," Dr. Weiss said. A diet high in fruits and vegetables would probably help protect sufferers, the researchers agreed.

Global warming linked to disease increase

By Grant McCool
Reuters

NEW YORK — Global warming and a decline in the quality of the world's ecosystems are increasing illnesses from water-borne organisms and from diseases such as malaria, dengue fever and Lyme disease, environmentalists said.

The environmentalists, senior managers of government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) from around the world, ended a two-week conference in New York by issuing a declaration calling for urgent action on the convention on biological diversity signed at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992.

"We're only beginning to get a window on the effects of global warming," said Don Melnick, the professor who directed the conference. "If there are correlations (with disease) this early, then there are going to be more correlations later on in the research."

Melnick, professor of anthropology and biological sciences at Columbia University, said in an interview that the declaration approved by the conference sought more spending, training and publicity on environmental

issues. "We will say, 'look, you have the real convention, but now we have to move from that convention to real action, we don't have any time to waste,'" he said.

The convention on biological diversity addressed the problem of species loss worldwide, with a commitment to national plans and conservation strategies.

Prof. Melnick said he hoped the influence of the participants in the New York conference, who came from Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, South America and Central America, would speed up the process.

According to the conference hosts, the New York-based Centre for Environmental Research and Conservation, "changes in species composition in habitats, extinctions, and other manipulations of our environment have seen and unseen implications for human health."

Prof. Melnick said examples were an increase in Lyme disease carried by deer ticks in the northeastern United States. The number of predators who stalk deer have decreased and there is more contact between humans and deer than in the past.

Malaria and dengue fever were on the increase in South East Asia, particularly in Indonesia, he said.

He said a water-borne microorganism, *Cryptosporidium parvum*, had emerged in New York state as a potentially serious threat to humans, especially those whose immune systems are compromised by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or other illness.

"We are now investigating the relationship between the quality of the ecosystems around watersheds and the level of *Cryptosporidium* in the water," Prof. Melnick said.

"The hypothesis is that as you move from more natural populations of mammals to altered ecosystems with domestic animals, the levels of *Cryptosporidium* go up."

He said such diseases grew out of the distribution of water. He said changes in habitat and local temperatures or global temperatures affected the distribution of water.

"If it affects it at the wrong time of year, that's when you can get an explosion in population or disease. You have altered the natural cycle," Prof. Melnick said.

Study: Exercise is best treatment for non-insulin dependent diabetes

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Exercise is perhaps the best treatment for non-insulin dependent diabetes and can prevent some complications of the ailment, according to a new study.

With regular, moderately vigorous exercise, the risk of contracting a worse form of diabetes, type II, is reduced by 25 per cent and

the risk of contracting a heart ailment is cut by 50 per cent, according to a study released at an American Diabetes Association meeting in San Francisco.

Walking for 45 minutes per day is enough to sharply reduce the risk of contracting ailments related to diabetes, said Jean-Pierre Despres of Laval University

Hospital in Quebec, Canada.

Type II diabetes affects about 7.5 million Americans, whose pancreases fail to produce the insulin needed to transfer glucose to cells for energy. The diabetes makes it twice as likely that men will suffer heart problems and three times as likely that women will.

Type II diabetes tends to affect primarily obese and sedentary adults and is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States. Heart disease is not the only severe complication it causes. Others are blindness, kidney failure and nerve damage.

Seaweed may kill cancer — report

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's Takara Shuzo Co. has said Monday it had discovered that a polysaccharide in seaweed and kelp has the effect of killing off cancer cells, the Kyodo News Agency reported.

The distilled spirits maker

said the effect was discovered when "polysaccharide extractions were introduced into a test tube of propagating cancer cells. There was no such effect on normal cells."

No official was immediately available at Takara

Shuzo to confirm the report.

The company, collaborating with a research laboratory, is considering conducting experiments on animals in the future on the effect of polysaccharide and hopes to eventually develop anti-cancer drugs and health products, Kyodo said.

The company started research on seaweed and kelp seeing that the death rates from cancer are low in regions where seaweed and kelp are regularly eaten, Kyodo said.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

HEARING DOUBLE
By Jill Winslow

ACROSS

- 1 Demand to one's
- 2 Try —
- 3 Blank town
- 4 Followed by suit
- 5 Boundary material
- 6 Greeting
- 7 City of Roman name
- 8 Quizzes class of
- 9 Soaring
- 10 Lyrical Alan
- 11 "Kiss Kiss"
- 12 "Kiss Kiss"
- 13 "Kiss Kiss"
- 14 "Kiss Kiss"
- 15 "Kiss Kiss"
- 16 "Kiss Kiss"
- 17 "Kiss Kiss"

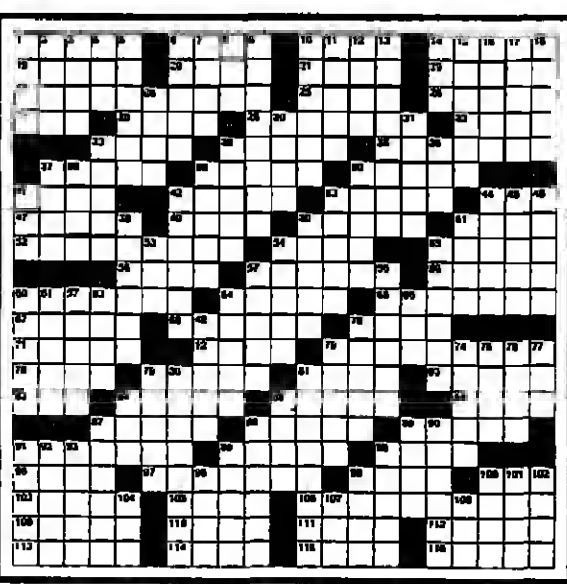
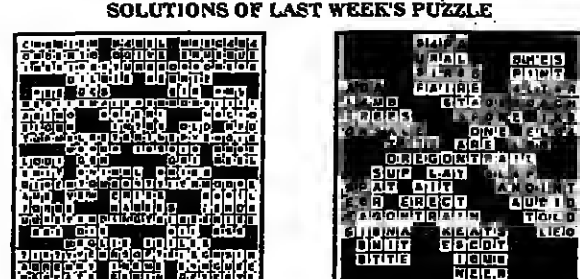
Diagramless 18x19

By Daniel J. Reed

ACROSS

- 1 Pizzazz cat cards
- 2 Actress Barbra
- 3 "Kiss Kiss"
- 4 "Kiss Kiss"
- 5 "Kiss Kiss"
- 6 "Kiss Kiss"
- 7 "Kiss Kiss"
- 8 "Kiss Kiss"
- 9 "Kiss Kiss"
- 10 "Kiss Kiss"
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- 16 "Kiss Kiss"
- 17 "Kiss Kiss"

SOLUTIONS OF LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE



Last Week's Cryptograms

1. Politician says the charges against him were politically motivated. In any event, the money involved was a lean. Hooves!

2. Easy violinist often prefers to strum lively pianists without a bow because, he says, it has more pizzazz.

3. Our happy teenagers enjoy eating meals from all the food groups: junk, fat, and take-out.

4. Big hairy bear preys on huzzas around town in heat-up station wagon.

CRYPTOGRAMS

1. JYXLC JQJAJALJTE WYUJAL MWD QKU

QJSE RAK'X CJTL JABSS XAFTT BQWL TV

BLQP MYTCJ CJT JAFAR-VTTC MTP.

2. IPY VDHEDRTYV YONGAMASW TST ETODZ

ZHYVS PTC TS JRCAYV. CDCI UOCCJIVE

INTZAU AG RAPIVH SDN.

3. ANIJANZ AWJTU LKJS ZTUS-WRISTS

AGTLZYTIE SC WST-WRISTS WRISTRI.

4. NEK NEODIL, OR BIG SALLOWERS ELSE, ON

ARKSL NCLSNM ERE BEN E GLITOWE

KSTLSNOIR.

5. "Josh Billings" (Henry Wheeler Shaw), American author (1818-1885)

THOUGHTS FOR THIS WEEK

A community is like a ship; everyone ought to be prepared to take the helm.
— Henrik Ibsen, Norwegian dramatist and poet (1828-1906)

No one is such a liar as the indignant man.
— Friedrich Nietzsche, German philosopher (1844-1900)

The life of the nation is secure only while the nation is honest, truthful, and virtuous.
— Frederick Douglass (C. 1817-1895)

Never lose your temper with the press or the public is a major rule of political life.
— Dame Christabel Pankhurst, English suffragist (1858-1958)

The only joy in the world is to begin.
— Cesare Pavese, Italian novelist (1908-1950)

As scarce as truth is, the supply is always greater than the demand.
— "Josh Billings" (Henry Wheeler Shaw), American author (1818-1885)

ANSWERS

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE:

1. Glare - to shine dazzlingly; to stare fiercely. Glare - white of an egg; a glaze or thin glue made from this.
2. Galore - abundance; plenty.
3. Old name of a woman's loose blouse; a kind of biscuit containing currants.
4. A street boy; an urchin.
5. A branch of medical study dealing with old age and its diseases.

PUZZLES

SUBURBAN RAILWAY SYSTEM
Here is a solution starting from station

(A)

ADEPONMLSRQUTBKJHGFCA

NEWS IN BRIEF

'Arabs should condemn nuclear-testing'

CAIRO (AFP) — The international organisation Greenpeace on Wednesday urged Arab leaders to condemn Chinese and U.S. nuclear testing at their summit in Cairo this weekend. "As international negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty reach a crucial point in Geneva, Greenpeace urges the Arab states to voice their strong opposition to nuclear testing in China and the United States," said Mario Damato of Greenpeace's Mediterranean office in Malta. "The Arab League should demand that U.S. and Chinese nuclear test sites and all similar sites in the world be shut down once and for ever." Mr. Damato added in a statement. Twenty-one Arab countries are to take part in the summit on Saturday and Sunday aiming to pressure Israel's new right-wing prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, to soften his stance on the Middle East peace process. The Arab League said Monday that the threat posed by Israel's nuclear weapons would be on the agenda of the summit. Arab countries want Israel to dismantle its nuclear arsenal, which the Jewish state has never acknowledged, so the Middle East can become a zone free of weapons of mass destruction.

Three minor quakes hit Turkey

ISTANBUL (AFP) — Three quakes registering up to 4.4 on the Richter scale hit regions in southern and western Turkey Wednesday but caused no injuries, seismologists said here. Two tremors at 2343 GMT and 0317 GMT in the southern region of Hatay were registered at 4.1 and 4.4 on the open-ended scale. The third occurred in the western Izmir region at 0310 GMT.

Turkish businesses hit in arson attacks

BERLIN (AFP) — Three Turkish travel agencies were damaged in a wave of petrol bomb attacks overnight, Berlin police said Wednesday. Investigators found a handwritten note at the scene of one of the attacks, probably from the hardline Turkish Communist Party, police said. It included the words in German: "Long live our fighters on hunger strike." However, police are not ruling out a link with the banned Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). A wave of attacks on Turkish businesses in Germany last year was blamed largely on PKK militants.

Woman sniffs out rapist in Berlin

BEIRUT (AFP) — A Norwegian rape victim helped police nab her attacker when she recognised his "foul body odour," the French language daily L'orient-le Jour reported on Wednesday. The Norwegian woman and her Lebanese husband were returning home from a dinner party when a gunman stopped their car on a dark mountain road north of Beirut, and forced them out. He dragged the woman to a wood where he raped her and stole her jewellery before fleeing. Even though she had not seen him clearly, the woman picked her attacker out of an identity parade of a dozen men after sniffing his "foul body odour," the newspaper said. Shortly before the rapist had testified to the police.

EU holds seminar on Somali options

NAIROBI (AFP) — Around 30 Somali intellectuals are to meet in the western Kenyan town of Naivasha on Thursday for a three-day European Union-funded seminar on political structures for Somalia, the EU office here said. The discussions will centre around different types of administration which could be considered by Somali decision-makers setting up future governments in the war-torn country. Somalia has not had a proper government since the ouster of former dictator Siad Barre in 1991 and has been riven by factional fighting.

Kabul robbed of \$70,000

KABUL (AP) — Thieves stole \$70,000 from a United Nations office in Afghanistan's war-weary capital, a U.N. official said on Wednesday. Police have arrested 17 suspects in connection with the robbery at the office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, according to Terry Pitzner, head of the UNHCR office in Kabul. It's not clear why the theft, which occurred nearly one month ago, was kept secret or why it was revealed now. All the suspects are Afghan nationals and two are UNHCR employees, said Mr. Pitzner. "We are happy with what they (police) have been doing so far with the investigation which is now into its final stage," he said. Mr. Pitzner said the robbery virtually bankrupted the UNHCR's programmes in Kabul. Much of the UNHCR effort is directed at the thousands of displaced people living in Kabul, often in squalid conditions in war-ruined neighbourhoods. "It is a severe crime to steal from one of the poorest nations," said Mr. Pitzner. "I hope the police are tough on the culprits." The \$70,000 was to be used to pay salaries and run UNHCR programmes, he said.

Soldiers kills 28 Kurdish rebels

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey (AP) — Twenty-eight Kurdish rebels were reported killed Wednesday in a clash in southeastern Turkey as the three-month-old military campaign against the guerrillas showed no signs of lull. The regional governor's office, reporting the casualties, said that the battle occurred in eastern Van province, neighbouring Iran. The rebels were tracked down after kidnapping four shepherds, who were rescued during the clash, it added. In other action, five soldiers were killed when Kurdish rebels ambushed a military patrol vehicle in eastern Elazig province Tuesday night, the Anadolu news agency said. A spring offensive launched by the army in April throughout the region has claimed the lives of more than 1,100 rebels and 100 soldiers, according to official figures. The Kurdish guerrillas have been fighting for autonomy since 1984. The military's operations have spilled into Iraq at times to hit rebel bases there, most recently last week.

Human disaster continues in Iraq, Care reports

AMMAN (J.T.) — Following an assessment mission to Iraq, the international humanitarian organisation Care's Middle East regional director is warning of a continuing humanitarian crisis in the country in spite of an "oil for food" agreement between the United Nations and the government of Iraq.

Robert Yallop says humanitarian work must continue in Iraq, adding that the world should not think the "oil for food" agreement will bring immediate change. "The children's hospitals I have just visited are without sterile areas, have no antiseptics or disinfectants available, and have no air conditioning in 50 degrees Celsius temperatures. Furthermore, they have virtually no nursing or cleaning staff."

"But the most profoundly disturbing situation is the chronic stage of malnutrition of all admissions into the hospitals. Many children have had birth weights of between two kilograms and three kilograms, and the mothers accompanying children in the hospitals are nearly all anaemic and malnourished. The situation is absolutely appalling."

Draft said to condition Israel ties

(Continued from page 1)

a "cover-up" for his hardline policies. Mr. Bouez stressed that any invitation to resume the stalled peace negotiations with Israel must be based on the principle of a land-for-peace settlement.

"I think that even if his proposal seems to be positive on the form, there are still some interrogation points," Mr. Bouez told reporters. "What about the full withdrawal from the Golan Heights, what about the withdrawal from the West Bank, what about the status of Jerusalem and what about the future of the Palestinian state?"

"I'm afraid that the positive style in the proposal is covering up for some very hard positions," he added.

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy urged Syria to join the Jewish state in making compromises for peace. "Both sides, if there's an interest in peace, will meet in the middle. We want peace. That's not enough. Is the other side truly ready for it? It must prove it... If both sides want peace and we want peace, we'll meet in the middle," he told Israeli Radio.

Egypt has slammed the policies of Mr. Netanyahu, warning that his government's positions risk damaging the peace process.

"This programme shows a hardening in the Israeli position which can only create negative effects on the peace process," Mr. Musa said late Tuesday.

In his speech Mr. Netanyahu "did not reply to several questions but instead raised many more. He expresses the desire for peace and good relations but at the same time he says no," Mr. Musa added.

At least 11 Arab leaders will attend the Arab summit in Cairo. Other heads of state may attend in person or send representatives.

Here is a list of the delegation heads, based on official sources in Cairo or their countries. A second list of expected delegation leaders is based on press or diplomatic sources.

Arab League slams Turkey

(Continued from page 1)

Syria is harbouring a leader of Turkey's separatist Kurds.

The Israeli embassy in Ankara strongly denied Wednesday that its ambassador had expressed reservations over the military cooperation contract between Israel and Turkey.

"Nothing is true" about the report that the ambassador, Zvi Elpeleg, was concerned about the defence pact with Turkey because of the political power of the Islamists there, embassy spokesman Eitan Neah said. "The ambassador never sent such a cable. It's a fabrication," the spokesman said of the information, broadcast by Israeli state radio earlier Wednesday.

The radio said that Mr. Elpeleg justified his cautious stance by warning that the current transition government in Ankara could be replaced by a coalition led by Islamic fundamentalists, who have already warned they would scrap the deal.

Arab leaders seek unity, but differences run deep

NICOSIA (AFP) — Arab leaders open a summit in Cairo on Saturday aiming to restore Arab unity, but the bitter disputes which have poisoned relations are deeply rooted and unlikely to be resolved in just two days.

"The Cairo summit is incapable of smoothing out the inter-Arab differences which have accumulated over decades and have become structural," said Ahmad Yousef Ahmad from the centre for Arab affairs in Cairo.

"To overcome its problems, the Arab World needs a political maturity which escapes it at the moment." The summit will be the first in six years and has been called amid fears for the peace process prompted by the victory of right-wing leader Benjamin Netanyahu in Israeli elections which ousted peace architect Shimon Peres.

The major Arab dispute pits the supporters and the adversaries of Iraq, follow-

ing its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

All Arab leaders condemned Iraq at the last Arab summit held shortly after the invasion, but differed over what action to take, with one camp opposing the intervention of Western forces to rout Iraqi troops.

The Israeli-Arab peace process launched in October 1991 has proved another source of acrimony, with Syria angrily denouncing Jordan and the Palestinians for steaming ahead to conclude separate deals with Israel.

Talks between Syria and the Jewish state have dragged, and Damascus has viewed suspiciously the start of fledgling ties between the Gulf states of Oman and Qatar and three north African countries of Morocco, Tunisia and Mauritania in North Africa.

Syria and Lebanon have boycotted the multilateral talks with Israel in which all other Arab countries,

except Iraq, are involved, some reluctantly following pressure from the United States.

A further sign of division came in 1994 when the six oil-rich Gulf monarchies unilaterally lifted their boycott on foreign companies dealing with Israel, still enforced by other Arab states.

In the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf war, lingering territorial and border disputes also reemerged opposing neighbours such as Saudi Arabia against Yemen and Qatar, Egypt against Sudan, and Qatar against Bahrain.

The collapse of Arab ranks is further illustrated by the inaction of regional bodies such as the Arab cooperation council, grouping Egypt, Iraq, Jordan and Yemen set up after the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war, but frozen since 1990.

The Arab Maghreb Union, of which gathers Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Libya and Mauritania, is

threatened with suspension because of a dispute between Rabat and Algiers.

Moreover, Kuwait still accuses the Palestinians, Sudan and Yemen of supporting the Iraq occupation.

And the three Arab countries under U.N. sanctions, Iraq, Libya and Sudan, have sharply criticised their partners within the 22-member Arab League for failing to do enough to support them.

"In face of the complexity of the Arab situation, the Cairo summit will only be able to neutralise the conflicts in order to prevent new differences erupting," said Ahmad.

But Palestinian Deputy Haidar Abdul Shafi was more optimistic.

"With a little willingness, the Arab countries could reach a minimum threshold of understanding to face up to the many challenges with which they are confronted."

Peace process needs assurances

(Continued from page 1)

and political pressures generated in the Palestinian territories," he said.

The election of Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu as prime minister of Israel and the policy pronouncement he has since made have spread fears that his government would chill the peace process and slow, if not abort, the peace process. Mr. Netanyahu's election was also expected to stall the peace talks with Syria and Lebanon due to Mr. Netanyahu's declared intentions of retaining the occupied Golan Heights.

But after talks with Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien and other Canadian officials Prime Minister Hassan warned against exaggerated pessimism on the future of the peace talks after Mr. Netanyahu's election and said Jordan would adopt a wait-and-see approach.

The Prince said the Canadian reaction to the return of Likud to power and the Arab summit which opens in Cairo Saturday should not push Israel into a "siege mentality" due to the negative repercussions such a situation would have on the peace process.

The Prince said in his address to the council that Jordan will continue to work towards ensuring a comprehensive peace in the region. "Jordan intends to continue to provide the voice of reason, neutrality and a vi-

sion of peaceful co-existence amongst all neighbours," said the Crown Prince, who was scheduled to leave for London late Wednesday where he will deliver a lecture at the Chatham House and receive an award from the Jewish Institute for Policy Research.

The Prince said that "with the peace process, Jordan is convinced not to confine its role to peacekeeping, peace making and peacebuilding in the Middle East but to continue its commitment to multilateralism."

Prince Hassan, who was scheduled to meet with Canadian Minister of International Cooperation and Minister responsible for Francophonie Pierre Pettigrew before leaving Canada, reiterated the Kingdom's commitment to the liberalisation of its economy, noting that it has completed negotiations for a free trade agreement with the Euro-Med partnership and is proceeding with efforts to finalise talks on membership in the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

Prince Hassan, who was accompanied on the visit by Her Royal Highness Princess Sarah, Minister of Post and Telecommunication Jamal Sarraf, Minister of Planning Rima Khalaf, General Secretary of Parliament Hakim Khair and other officials, said that globalism had become the trend of con-

temporary society but added that the "humanistic concept of globalisation has evolved from that of state security to human security."

"The aim is not only freedom from military fear, nuclear and otherwise, but the aim at the end is for people to live better life in common prosperity," said Prince Hassan, who added that the human dimensions of politics, security and economics are no longer to be discarded.

"Renewing the Kingdom's determination to achieve 'full democratisation of its governing institutions,'" the Crown Prince said Jordan and its people will continue to contribute to human and cultural civilisational understanding. He said the different for the Kingdom hosted on interfaith dialogue and understanding had tackled issues pertaining to ethics and identified common values in business, environment and gender issues among others.

This was done in conformity with "the Jordanian outlook that respects pluralism in its different forms."

The Prince also spoke of the danger of social erosion resulting from the spread of poverty and urged joint efforts to address the impact of that on society in terms of the spread of crime and violence.

Before leaving Ottawa for Montreal Wednesday, the Crown Prince held talks with the Canadian prime minister, Foreign Minister Lloyd Axworthy and other officials on the peace process, refugees,

interfaith dialogue and bilateral relations.

The Crown Prince also addressed meetings on peace-building and Christian and Muslim non-governmental organisations organised by the Canadian International Development Agency.

In these talks, Prince Hassan stressed the need to address the social, economic and human dimensions of the refugee problem, explaining that while Jordan, which hosts over 40 per cent of the overall Palestine refugee population, believes in the integration of refugees but rejects their assimilation.

He also stressed the importance of interfaith dialogue in promoting human understanding, saying that these meetings address common values but do not compromise on the beliefs of the followers of three monotheistic religions that attend them.

On the peace process, the Prince reiterated Jordan's commitment to comprehensive peace and stressed that there was no alternative to the peace process to ensure the prosperity and security of the Middle East.

Canadian officials expressed support for the Jordanian stand, with Mr. Axworthy emphasising the importance of listening to the Crown Prince's views and assessment of the peace process as it passes through a critical time. He also said that Canada will support Jordan at the Group of Seven meeting which will be held in France later this month.

Ekeus

(Continued from page 1)

Guard sites which they deemed vital to the country's security.

U.N. officials said Wednesday all the inspectors except Mr. Smidovich would start leaving Bahrain for their home countries.

Mr. Ekeus said in Manama, where he arrived from New York, that he hoped the firm rebuff from the Security Council would be seen by Baghdad as a "clear demonstration of the will of the international community."

But Salah Al Mukhtar, a prominent Iraqi editorialist, accused Mr. Ekeus of being "a liar and a tool of the Americans" who sought to violate Iraqi sovereignty by entering military sites to "island the Iraqis."

"When will your and your master's bloody instinct come to an end?" Mr. Mukhtar asked in Al Jumhuriyah newspaper. "At the end of your trip, you will find Iraqi blood not only on your collar but also on your white hair and grey suit."

Mr. Mukhtar said that when Mr. Ekeus insisted on access to any sites in Iraq he was "deliberately trying to insult the Iraqi people" and acting like an insolent "killer cowboy."

Mr. Mukhtar accused Mr. Ekeus of trying to prolong U.N. trade sanctions on Iraq, which, he said, had so far caused the deaths of more than one million people.

Netanyahu assumes premiership

(Continued from page 1)

certainly have to determine a stance," Mr. Levy said before the cabinet meeting.

Mr. Netanyahu has been non-committal on the Hebron withdrawal. Settlers there oppose any army pull out from the town.

At the handover ceremony Mr. Peres drew a laugh from Mr. Netanyahu when he said: "I want to wish Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu success in his work. His success is the success of all of us, so long as we don't share the failures."

Mr. Netanyahu, speaking at a Wednesday ceremony credited Mr. Peres for a half-century of service to the state and promised cooperation with the outgoing premier.

Handing over the office he held for six months after the slaying of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Mr. Peres said the path to peace would not be easy.

"Israel is near the top of the mountain, but there are mines on the way to the peak," Mr. Peres said in a speech that seemed intended to instruct his successor in the ways of governance.

Tuesday's inauguration was marked by Mr. Netanyahu's tussling with his party's right-wing over a cabinet position for Mr. Sharon, who expected to be repaid for tireless campaigning with the coveted defence or finance portfolios.

A compromise being offered was the creation of a

new portfolio for Mr. Sharon — infrastructure minister in charge of defence industries, the state land administration, railroads, and roads in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Mr. Sharon, however, has not yet accepted and Rafael Eitan, the new agriculture minister, has said he would hold the government before ceding authority over water sources to the newly established Sharon portfolio.

The Sharon crisis culminated a weeks-long juggling act in which Mr. Netanyahu negotiated coalition deals and completed his cabinet puzzle with a six-party coalition.

Political commentator Yoel Marcus wrote in the Haaretz daily that Mr. Netanyahu, Israel's first directly elected prime minister, felt he owed little to Likud party rivals "who never really believed he could win... he humiliated them and showed them who's boss."

At the first cabinet meeting Wednesday, Mr. Netanyahu called for government unity. "It is very important that we make clear from the outset that against the burdens we must bear, and there are many burdens and difficulties ahead, we will rise above any narrow consideration... and work together to bring hope and blessing to the people of Israel," Mr. Netanyahu said.

The new cabinet includes newcomers like Iraqi-born Yitzhak Mordechai as defence minister and former Soviet dissident Natan Sharansky as trade minister.

Saudi petrodollars up but spending spree unlikely

DUBAI (R) — Saudi Arabia has earned a nearly \$4 billion windfall in oil revenue during the first half of this year because of strong world prices, bankers said Wednesday.

But the kingdom, whose oil revenues account for 70 per cent of government income, is unlikely to go on a spending spree given the prospects for lower oil prices in the next six months, the Saudi-based bankers said.

Riyadh, which is the world's largest oil producer and exporter, has this year exported six million barrels per day (bpd) of crude at an average price of \$3.00-\$3.50 a barrel above the \$14-\$14.50 a barrel incorporated in its 1996 budget.

Oil prices surged in the first half of the year because of a prolonged cold spell but are expected to come off recent highs later this year because of an agreement between Baghdad and the United Nations allowing Iraq to export oil.

Last year oil revenues were worth \$39.5 billion.

The higher than anticipated revenue has allowed Riyadh to build up its foreign currency reserves, pay for military supplies from allies such as the United States and meet a series of outstanding debts to contractors and farmers, bankers said.

"The government is now implementing a retrenchment policy. It is unlikely that the government will go

back to a major spending spree," Henry Azzam, chief economist at the Jeddah-based National Commercial Bank said.

Riyadh's apparent preference to build up reserves and pay off debts rather than pumping the money into the local market or awarding major new multi-billion dollar contracts with leading contractors is in line with the government's efforts to rein in its \$4.9 billion budget deficit.

"The increase is first seen in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) statistics which shows that foreign currency reserves are up considerably," Mr. Azzam said.

IMF figures for the first quarter of the year estimate

foreign currency reserves at \$10.5 billion, up \$2 billion from the same period last year.

Western arms suppliers are eagerly waiting for Riyadh, the world's largest arms importer, to announce new orders for warplanes and tanks.

Government caution in releasing fresh petrodollars into the economy is also explained by the outlook for weaker oil prices with the return of Iraqi oil to the market later this year.

Under an "oil-for-food" deal signed with between Baghdad and the United Nations on May 20, Iraq will export approximately 800,000 bpd of oil to markets for the first time since its invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.

"It's of course in the mind of Saudi planners. They know that Iraq could be a threat to oil prices later this year," one banker in Riyadh, who declined to be named, said.

The likelihood of higher output from producers outside OPEC coupled with Iraqi exports and quota-busting by some OPEC states are expected to combine to weaken prices by some \$2 a barrel in the second half of the year, energy analysts say.

Benchmark cash Brent has averaged \$19.00 this year, translating into a general price for Saudi's six export grades of around \$17.50 a barrel.

Oman expects surge in private investment

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The Gulf state of Oman expects investment by its private sector to more than double during its latest five-year development plan as it pursues reforms to diversify its oil-reliant economy.

According to official Omani figures, private investment is projected to reach around 3.8 billion Omani riyals (\$9.88 billion) during the 1996-2000 plan, compared with nearly 1.5 billion riyals (\$3.9 billion) during the previous plan.

The projected investment accounts for around 53 per cent of the total investment during the 1996-2000 plan against the previous level of 40 per cent, according to estimates by the Omani Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Bankers in Muscat said the increase was forecast because the government has introduced fresh incentives for investors and is planning to set up multi-billion-dollar projects in participation with the private sector.

Total investment during the 1996-2000 plan, Omani's fifth development blueprint, was projected by the Omani finance ministry to surge by

87 per cent to 7.28 billion riyals (\$18.9 billion) over the fourth plan.

A large part of the funds would be pumped into an (\$8 billion) gas liquefaction plant (LNG) and an \$800 million petrochemical project. Other projects include electricity, sewage treatment and industrial ventures.

Oman, a small oil producer outside OPEC, has launched a large-scale reform programme over the past few years to diversify its sources of income, which depends heavily on unpredictable crude export earnings.

The reforms include privatisations, incentives for industrial and other productive enterprises, opening up the stock market to non-Omanis, freeing interest rates and allowing foreign investors to fully own some projects.

"The level of the expected investment in the fifth development plan is not exaggerated," said Mahmoud Al Jarwani, director of the Muscat Stock Exchange.

Oman's reforms, the broadest in the oil-rich Gulf, have started to produce results, with non-oil sectors recording high growth rates.

Arab Gulf states favour tight bank controls

MUSCAT (AFP) — Arab Gulf states are in favour of tight controls on international banks to strengthen their financial position and ensure stability in world markets, the Saudi monetary chief said.

Hamad Al Sayari, governor of the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (SAMA), said authorities in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) were working to consolidate their banking sector in line with recommendations of the

Bank for International Settlement (BIS).

"GCC states are keen about stability in the world financial markets as they are creditors of these markets and they benefit from their cash flows," he said in a lecture carried by the official Saudi Press Agency.

"GCC states strongly support the efforts and measures taken by international supervisors to strengthen their supervision of banks and financial institutions around the world."

Mr. Sayari was referring to the BIS's Basle committee, which has issued guidelines to banks worldwide on the level of their capital adequacy, the ratio between shareholders' equities and assets.

The guidelines stipulated all banks should have a minimum adequacy of eight per cent to ensure they have enough funds to face any financial crisis.

The committee also classified developing nations, except Saudi Arabia, as

high-risk countries in lending activities because of their low adequacy.

The kingdom, the world's top oil supplier, was excluded from the classification because it was the fifth biggest creditor of the world bank.

Such a classification has prompted most GCC states to carry out reforms in their banking sector to boost adequacy in the hope they will be dropped from the high-risk list.

Mr. Sayari said capital

adequacy in Saudi Arabia's banks had reached as high as 21 per cent due to measures by SAMA to boost their capital base.

"I think the adequacy in the other GCC members is equivalent to the level in Saudi Arabia," he said.

The GCC also groups Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in a political, defence and economic alliance created in 1981.

EU summit to tackle mounting jobs problem

BRUSSELS (R) — In an attempt to revitalise confidence among consumers and businesses, EU leaders meeting in Florence this week are expected to endorse a sweeping jobs initiative by European Commission President Jacques Santer.

The so-called "pact of confidence for employment" is designed to be the centrepiece of a summit which risks being derailed by the row between Britain and the EU over mad cow disease.

EU officials remain hopeful that a deal on beef can be reached in time for the meeting on Friday and Saturday.

Mr. Santer's multi-faceted approach, which includes a call for flexible working hours, is largely a political

attempt to assuage growing public anxiety over unemployment.

With slightly more than 18 million people out of work, the leaders of the EU's 15 member states have come to recognise that their ambitions for closer economic and political integration stand threatened by a failure to spur employment growth.

Although parts of Mr. Santer's programme are simply a reminder to politicians of prior commitments to create a vigorous and competitive European single market, the controversial call for flexible working hours — especially more part-time jobs — goes to the heart of relations between employers and trade unions.

Meeting in Rome on Saturday, European labour

ministers, union bosses and employers' organisations failed to make any progress towards an accord on working hours but agreed to continue talks over the next several months. While the commission recognises that it can play only a marginal role in boosting jobs — the primary responsibility resting with national governments — Mr. Santer's high-profile strategy hopes to focus the minds of politicians on Europe's most pressing economic problem.

"Just as Madrid was the summit of the single currency, Florence is supposed to be the employment summit," said one senior commission official.

The objective of the Florence summit, say officials, is to get an agreement in principle on the broad

outlines of the confidence pact and a commitment on how to achieve the objectives in time for the EU summit in Dublin in December.

Also on the agenda is an update on plans for economic and monetary union (EMU). The progress report will highlight recent ministerial talks on a revamped exchange rate mechanism (ERM) and efforts to secure a budget stability pact.

It has been broadly agreed that a new ERM, linking the single currency with those

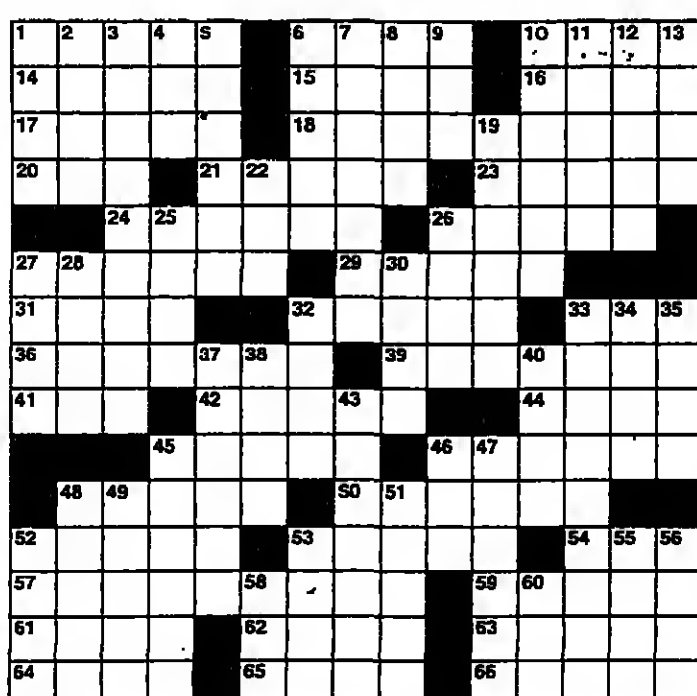
outside the monetary bloc, is needed after the start of monetary union in 1999.

In contrast to the current grid, the new mechanism is expected to be more flexible, with a future European central bank (ECB) playing a central role in initiating currency realignments.

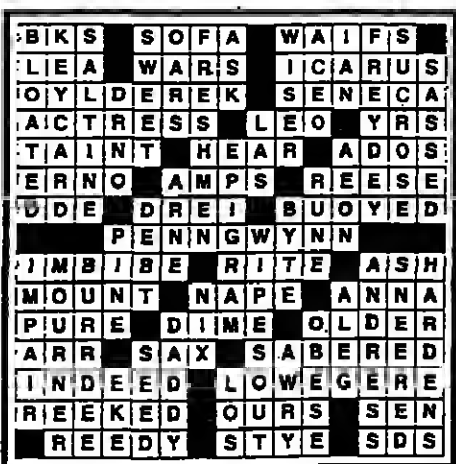
Moreover, there are expected to be limits on ECB intervention for currencies outside the new grid, a strategy designed to dissuade countries from competitive devaluation.

THE Daily Crossword by Diane C. Baldwin

- ACROSS
- Glowing coal
 - Wag
 - Quickly, briefly
 - "Good Times" actress Esther
 - Khayyam
 - Songbird
 - Grads
 - Idler
 - Comprehend
 - Jalopy
 - Kicks out
 - Bump memento
 - Forfeits
 - Confederated
 - Join
 - Timely benefit
 - With notched edges
 - Health resort
 - Handout reading
 - He has the floor
 - Moreover
 - Love, in Roma
 - Factory location
 - Sheepish
 - Stands out
 - Own up to
 - Disinherit
 - Siir up
 - Feeling
 - Aids a felon
 - Overtake
 - Infant's fool warmer
 - Shed
 - Skating place
 - Speech
 - affection
 - Singing group
 - Diving bird
 - Famous loch
 - Schoolboy collar
 - Miser
 - Sampras of tennis
 - War god
 - Posh
 - Send out
 - That
 - Guinness Book listings
 - Ends
 - Sault — Marie
 - Gil of baseball, once

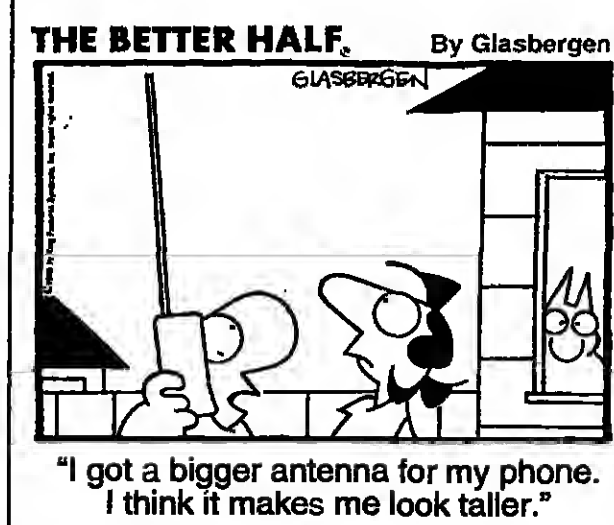


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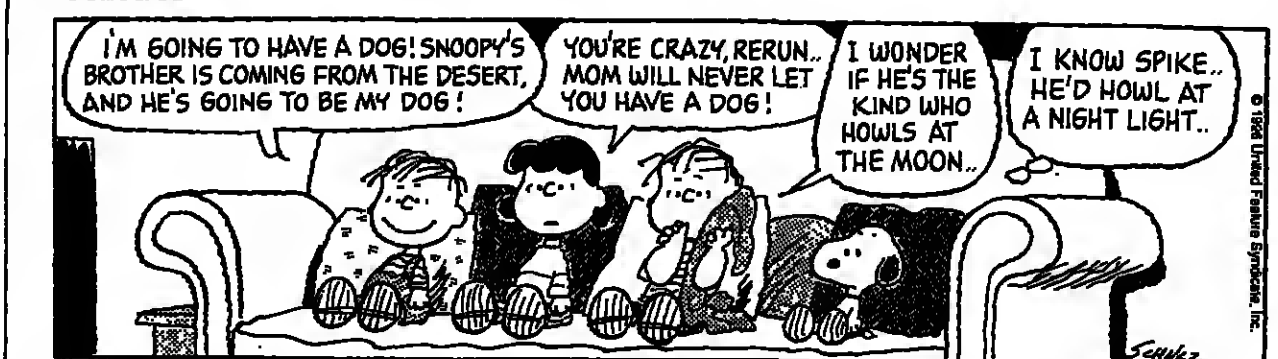


- DOWN
- Epochs
 - Double agent
 - High society member
 - Tree
 - Save from peril
 - Soda offerings
 - Unpaid athlete
 - Level
 - Desert-like

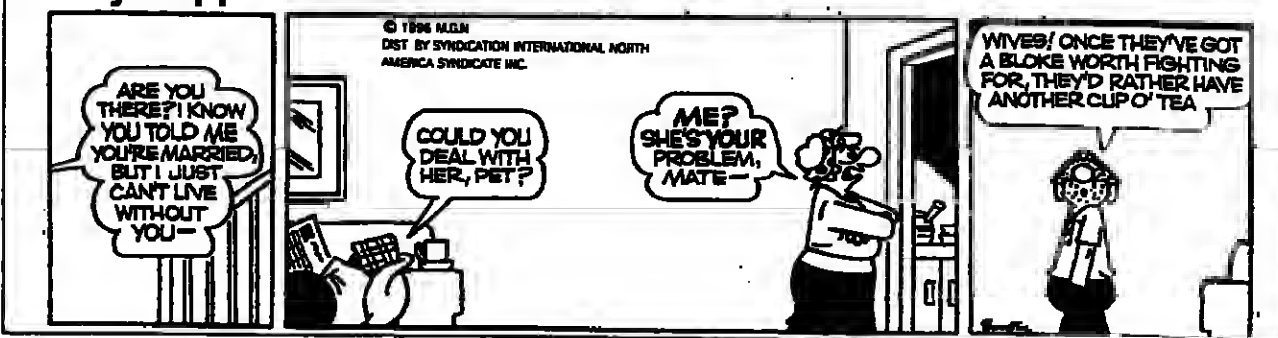
- Floated aloft
- Attends a banquet
- Agitated
- Author Milne
- Ta-Is in Turin
- Adhesive
- Yale students
- Swiss peak
- Genetic material



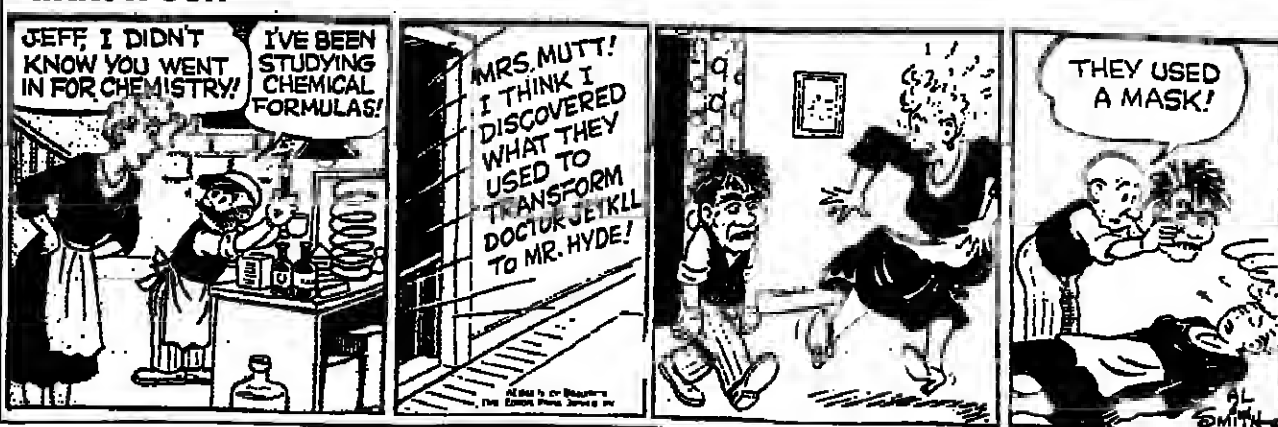
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n' Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR THURSDAY JUNE 20, 1996

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You arise feeling wide awake and enthusiastic today and get right at new outlets you have started and handle them efficiently.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 21) Show more affection for your mate and strengthen the bonds between you. Get busy expanding your business for your prosperity.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Discuss with partners just how to have more accord in the days ahead. Some new item crops up which can open the door to change.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Buy the mechanisms which can make your career activities more efficient today and less difficult. Take it easy tonight.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Make those arrangements in the morning today for recreation later tonight on with persons you like. Work on some talent you have.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Get the situation at home improved considerably in the morning today. Have guests in who have interesting ideas for your advancement.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Be charming at the time and convince others to help you with a plan you are working on, and show generosity in the praise for the assistance.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Think about how to get greater abundance today if you are to become more prosperous. Set up a plan which is workable.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You are highly magnetic today and you can impress others tremendously and thereby gain your aims for you to be successful.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to Jan. 20) Take time to be alone with an expert and plan greater expansion for the days to come. One you love can also give you good ideas.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) This is a good day to add to your roster of friends and make your life more interesting. Go out and buy important items.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Get the help of those who can direct your outside affairs at this time. Try to your bank account for the lean times which may occur.

FOR FRIDAY JUNE 21, 1996
ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Expansion is on your mind during the daytime today, so make real progress. Your vision is excellent and you can accomplish a great deal.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 21) If you listen to the ideas of wise business persons at this time, you can extend your activities considerably. You can enjoy greater profits today.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Reaching final decisions with fellow associates during the daytime today is wise and then you can work on small details connected with them.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You need to stop procrastinating and get more completed in the evening. Get your talents working nicely for you to be successful in the eyes of your loved ones.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Take a little time for amusements with good friends during the daytime today. Do your utmost to please others and you can get their advice on important matters.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) It is important that you complete a home project before you go on to something else in your agenda. Be active and happy with your loved ones.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You have fine ideas at this time so that you can improve routines, so carry through with them. Invite close friends in tonight for some great fun.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) This is a good day today to make collections and pay bills and handle your financial obligations wisely. Show that you are clever.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You need to wind up loose ends of some personal project which you have begun. Practical friends can be very helpful to you at this time.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to Jan. 20) Start a new campaign at this time which can bring you much greater success for the days ahead. Bring it out to the open in the evening.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) A close friend may not give you both sides of any situation at this time and this puzzles you. Figure the whole matter out and gain your aims.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Try to figure out how you stand in some civic matter today and get information from bigwigs. Be with your closest friends and loved ones for good times.

BIRTHSTONE OF JUNE: EMERALD

Euro 96

Denmark's hopes extinguished

SHEFFIELD (AFP) — Denmark's slender quarter-final hopes in Euro 96 were finally extinguished here on Wednesday despite beating Turkey 3-0 in their Group D match.

The Danes knew their chances had quickly gone from none to impossible when word came through from Nottingham that Portugal were leading Croatia 2-0 at half-time and likely to score more. In the end Portugal ran out easy 3-0 winners. The news meant Denmark, the defending European champions, could do nothing as a win or a draw by Portugal would guarantee them the last quarter-finals spot, Croatia having already qualified.

The Danes should have opened the scoring just after the start of the second half when Brian Laudrup sent a shot over the top after Rasmus Rieker had beaten away a close-range effort from Allan Nielsen. But minutes later Laudrup was rewarded in the 50th minute when he finally managed to end the stalemate by scoring the first of his two goals.

Erik Bo Andersen headed the ball on for his Rangers colleague to skip away from keeper Rustu and steer the ball into an empty Turkish net and chalk up his 13th goal for his country. Then Nielsen fired over the top after a great through ball from Michael Laudrup. Nielsen was finally rewarded when he shot home in the 70th minute.

Laudrup shot his second six minutes from the end when he found himself free on the right just inside the area. Turkey were simply looking for their first goal of the competition and played some neat football at the beginning of the game.

Portugal beat Croatia and both qualify

NOTTINGHAM (AFP) — Portugal beat Croatia 3-0 here on Wednesday to win Group D following goals by Luis Figo, Joao Pinto and a late strike from Domingos.

A vastly understrength but already qualified Croatian side were outplayed by a lively Portuguese midfield which created scoring chances throughout the match.

Figo scored after four minutes to give a dream start for the Portuguese and Pinto added another on 33 minutes. Then substitute Domingos took advantage of defensive disarray to score seven from time.

Portugal scored only two goals in their two previous games but the chances came readily against a Croatian team showing seven changes from the side which beat Denmark last Sunday to clinch their own qualification.

Croatia tried to fight Portugal's slick technique with some aggressive challenges and chalked up three yellow cards in the first half, while West Ham Slaven Bilic was lucky to escape punishment for a wild lunge at Couto when the German referee Bernd Heynemann's back was turned.

Croatia brought on Aljosa Anovic, Zvonimir Boban and Davor Suker at the start of the second half in an attempt to restore at least a semblance of pride.



England's Paul Gascoigne (left) fights for the ball with the Netherlands' Jordi Cruyff during their Group A European soccer match at Wembley June 18. The Dutch team lost to England 4-1, but their only goal was enough to advance the team to the next round (Reuters photo)

England complete mission impossible

LONDON (AFP) — England completed mission impossible with four goals against the Dutch to cast a vastly different light on their Euro 96 chances as they finally returned as a major international nation.

England failed to qualify for the last World Cup and had a miserable time at the 1992 European Championships, but their 4-1 win over Holland finally brought them out of the international doldrums.

They have only been a mediocre player on the international scene since reaching the 1990 World Cup semi-final and having one of the best and most exciting leagues in the world.

But two goals from both Teddy Sheringham and Alan Shearer emphatically boosted their standing worldwide as a high-calibre country.

Their build-up has been marred by criticism over their drinking, behaviour and fitness, but the result proved England's preparations have been spot on.

Accurate finishing in front of a capacity crowd left Dutch fans in shocked silence as England coach Terry Venables had his finest hour.

Venables, who hands the reigns of the team over to Glenn Hoddle at the end of the championship, enjoyed his best ever result in his 21-match, 27-month tenure.

But Guus Hiddink's Holland still survived in the competition despite alleged racial tensions in the camp. A late goal from substitute Patrick Kluivert means Holland face

France at Anfield on Saturday in the quarter-finals.

Venables admitted to being surprised by the margin of England's victory.

"I certainly did not think we would get four goals," he said.

"I thought we had a very tough game on our hands and had to get a lot of movement if we were going to get anything from it — and I must say we did that very well."

"The players were up in confidence from the last game and took it from there. I am very pleased with the players, they have done really well."

Both Shearer and Sheringham left the field with a quarter-hour to go but England had already broken a whole host of records by this result.

England had not even scored two goals in a European Championship finals since 1980 when they beat Spain 2-1 — their opponents in the Wembley quarter-final at Wembley on Saturday.

They had not beaten Holland since 1982 and before the game Holland had just lost one of their last 20 games against British sides or Eire.

England also got sweet revenge from being prevented a ticket to the 1994 World Cup by Holland.

However England might miss midfielder Paul Ince, who earned his second yellow card for shirt tugging, though it leaves the way clear for David Platt to return in midfield should he overcome a rib injury.

Stoichkov's English League dreams in tatters after racist remarks

NEWCASTLE (AFP) — Controversial Bulgarian striker Hristo Stoichkov's hopes of playing in the English League were in tatters here Wednesday after he admitted making racist slurs against the French team.

The 30-year-old tried to justify his comments by claiming that it happens all the time.

French defender Marcel Desailly, who had hatted face to face with Stoichkov through the France-Bulgaria match on Tuesday afternoon which the French won 3-1, said he had been shocked by the attack on him.

"In the first 20 minutes he made racist comments towards me and the other African players in our team."

"He said black this, and black that and made monkey-gestures."

He abused and insulted us and I do not appreciate his remarks," said an upset Desailly.

But an unrepentant Stoichkov, whose three Euro 96 performances have caught the eye of Newcastle United Manager Kevin Keegan, said he could not see what all the fuss was about.

"Yes, I did say that. It is

normal for that to happen all over the pitch. If you took a microphone round every player, they would all be saying things like that," said the Parma goalscorer.

And he offered a word of advice to Desailly.

"He is a great player and I respect him greatly, but I hope he takes this like a man," said Stoichkov.

Keegan admits he is a big fan of the Parma player and he was even more impressed as he watched him scoring in his team's match against Romania after only 3 minutes.

"He's a great player," enthused Keegan.

But his confessed racial attacks on the French players makes it almost impossible for Keegan to bring him to the North.

The Football Association (FA) have been waging a campaign for over ten years to stamp out racial taunting against black players.

Former Manchester United star and now Inter Milan midfielder Paul Ince, Liverpool's John Barnes and Nottingham Forest's Viv Anderson have all publicly complained about race attacks against them.

Fans even went as far as to throw bananas at Barnes during league matches.

Controversy has never been far from the charismatic Stoichkov.

He has admitted to being "genial but mad" and certainly his part in the 1985 Bulgarian Cup final brawl which led to him being suspended for a year confirmed the latter part of his diagnosis.

He also received a lengthy suspension in Spain after assaulting the referee in the 1990 Spanish Super Cup.

He joined Barcelona from CSKA Sofia in 1989-90 season, having scored three goals against the Catalan side in the Cup Winners' Cup and having won the Golden Boot award for 38 goals in the season.

Four domestic championships and the 1992 European Cup final triumph over Sampdoria, a post denying him a goal, followed.

But his move to Parma has not been a great success and if he is to persuade the critics that his great career is not on the decline, he needs to show he has still plenty to offer.

His three goals shows he has his racial slurs shows he has perhaps too much to offer.

Letchkov bound for Marseille

MARSEILLE (AFP) — Olympique Marseille are set to sign Bulgaria's Mercurial Midfielder Yordan Letchkov from Hamburg, officials from the French club said here Wednesday.

The officials said Letchkov, 28, was on the point of signing a three-year deal with the 1993 European Cup winners drawn up by Marseille director general Jean-Michel Roussier.

Roussier said he believed that Bulgaria's elimination from Euro 96 on Tuesday after their defeat by France would "accelerate things."

The player, renowned for his winning goal against Germany in the 1994 World Cup quarter-final, is expected in Marseille later this week to undergo a medical examination.

Newly-promoted Marseille are also on the trail of skilful Russian Libero Yuri Nikiforov and Czech playmaker Karel Poborski.

Scotland beat Switzerland 1-0 but fail to qualify to quarters
Team tries to forget Euro 96 heartbreak and looks towards World Cup

BIRMINGHAM (AFP) — Coach Craig Brown put Scotland's heartbreak exit from Euro 96 behind him on Wednesday and began concentrating on his country's World Cup campaign.

Scotland travel to Austria in August for their first match and the signs are that there may

be few changes in personnel with even 33-year-old Rangers striker McCoist a candidate to carry on.

"We made a mistake four years ago after Sweden by going into a new World Cup campaign with the same players and we lost 3-1 in Switzerland," recalled Brown.

"I must be very careful but the players here have given their everything for Scotland over the past six weeks."

"Such is the way this group is and their fitness that they'd love to be playing a World Cup qualifier at the end of the week if that were possible."

"We are happy together but I know we must be really up for the job when we go to Vienna."

McCoist and 33-year-old Aberdeen defender Stewart McKimmie are perhaps the two players most observers would expect to be jettisoned, but Brown insisted: "I am not writing off McKimmie yet, nor ally."

"He's scored his 19th international goal and he has got one now in a major tournament which will lift his confidence."

"Ally is still there scor-



A dejected Swiss fan holds his head after they failed to qualify for the quarter-finals of Euro '96 at Birmingham's Villa Park Stadium June 18. Despite winning 1-0 Scotland failed to qualify in the Group A match after England's 4-1 defeat of Holland (Reuters photo)



Switzerland's Ramon Vega (centre) commiserates with Scotland's Gary McAllister (right) watched by Ian Hendry after the Euro '96 Group A match at Birmingham's Villa Park (Reuters photo)

ing goals and I hope he is bagging them in next season and possibly for us as well."

McCoist enjoyed two point-blank chances in the first 10 minutes against the Swiss but was foiled by saves by keeper Marco Pascolo.

But with skipper McAllister driving them on, Scotland finally scored their own goal of the tournament when the pair combined for McCoist to lash an unsavable 22-yard shot beyond Pascolo.

With England leading Holland 4-0, Scotland

were heading for the quarter-finals, reaching the final stage of a major championship for the first time in their history.

But then Patrick Kluivert struck for Holland at Wembley to save the Dutch from an early exit from Euro 96.

"We hate the hard luck tag which has followed us for years and this is desperately disappointing," said Brown after seeing his bravehearts add a new twist to a familiar tale of glorious failure.

"At one stage we didn't need another goal and we got that message on to the

players. Then Kluivert scored and we needed another goal, but it wasn't to be and now we are going home."

"It is hard to bear after the way we have played in three games and I feel we have made a favourable impression on the tournament."

"We've tried to pass the ball and no-one can say we justified the rank outsiders label we were given. We have played 13 matches in the European Championships, losing only two games and five goals."

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE
WATER AUTHORITY
OF JORDAN
INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

Date: 18/6/1996
Loan No.: 89 66 400
IFB No.: 45/96/KIW/ANIS/GA

1. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has received a loan from Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau in Deutsche Marks for the Water Supply of Greater Amman. It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract(s) for which this IFB has been issued.

2. The Water Authority now invites sealed bids from Bidders in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and the Federal Republic of Germany (eligible Bidders) for supply and installation of Geographic Information System (GIS) Computer Software for the Amman Network Information System (ANIS), as well as related data conversion and staff training.

3. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from, and inspect the bidding documents at the office of the Secretary General, Tenders Division, Water Authority, P.O. Box 2412 Amman, Jordan, Tel. 680100, Tlx. 22439 WAJ JO, Fax. 679143.

4. A complete set of the tender documents may be purchased by any interested eligible Bidder on the submission of a written application to the above and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of JD 50.

5. All bids must be submitted in separate envelopes, marked "technical" and "financial", be accompanied by a bid security in the amount of JD 2,000- (in words: two thousand Jordan Dinars) and must be delivered to the office not later than 1200 hours, Jordan local time, on Wednesday, 17/7/1996.

6. Thursday, 11/7/1996, is the last day set for the purchasing of tender documents.

Eng. Koussai Quteishat
Secretary General
Water Authority

CINEMA TEL: 634144

PHILADELPHIA

Sharone Stone & William Baldwin in **Sliver**

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL: 699238

PLAZA

Gerard Depardieu in **My Father the Hero**

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 5:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL: 677220

CONCORD

CONCORD "1"
*Jodi Foster in **Neil**

Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CONCORD "2"
Batman Forever

Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

Amman Theatre & Cinema
TEL: 618274, 618275

Will shortly present Zaid Waid Awad theatre group in a play entitled **Five-Star Government**

Starring comedians: **Mahmoud Saimah & Hussein Tubeishat**

Nabil & Hisham's Theatre
TEL: 625155

PRESENTS **THE SATIRICAL COMEDY Arab Human Rights at 8:30 p.m.**

For reservation please call 625155 - 640155

Premier League 96 kicks off Friday

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Kingdom's top soccer teams return to action Friday as the Premier League Championship kicks off with ten teams taking part. With the new timetable set by the Jordan Soccer Federation (JSF) scheduling all games on Friday's only all teams will be playing on the same day in Amman, Salt, and Al Hasas stadiums.

Titleholders Al Wihdat take on Al Jazireh at Amman stadium, runners-up Al Faisali meet Al Ahli, third placed Al Ramtha meet newcomers Shabab Al Hussein. Al Hussein meet Kufroum, while Al Qadissieh play the other newcomers Al Qozazi.

The first leg of the competition concludes Sept. 6. Here's a brief look at the ten competing teams:

Al Wihdat: Although they won the title in the past two years, their recent disappointing results in the Arab Cup Winners' Cup which they hosted last month and in which they were knocked out in the first round might have a two-pronged effect on their upcoming matches. Al Wihdat enter the competition with their former coach Mohammad Mustafa back with the team after their Iraqi coach resigned during last month's championship.

Al Faisali: They finished second last year and already clinched the first of the season's title when they won the Cup Winners' Cup with a 1-0 win



Titleholders Al Wihdat

over Al Wihdat earlier in the year.

Al Faisali: However enter the competition with greater confidence after their second place finish and momentous results in the Cup Winners' Cup when they became the first Jordanian team to qualify for the finals.

Al Ramtha: A technical controversial decision by the JSF dropped them from second to third after the end of last year's matches. They however won the second of this year's titles when they beat Al Hussein to win the Federation Shield earlier this month.

Al Hussein: Although their first and only major title was the Shield in 1994, Al Hussein have in recent years become a strong contender only to

falter in the final rounds and finish among the top teams without actually getting a shot at the title.

Al Ahli: Although they reached the brink of relegation last year, Al Ahli, one of the veteran teams of the league, managed to hang on to their place in the Premier League with a good showing in the final weeks. Their fans hope that they will be better prepared for competition last year.

Kufroum: Despite limited resources and experience they managed to stay among the top teams for the last two years. Their chances for an advanced standing however are still far-fetched.

Al Qadissieh: While having a good record in the league two years ago, Al Qadissieh showed a

disappointing form last year and did not live up to the expectations of their fans.

Al Jazireh: Showing the ability to stay among the top five seemed difficult last season and the team was only content with a halfway standing while avoiding the prospect of relegation.

Al Qozazi and Shabab Al Hussein: The two newly-promoted teams in the Premier League will be hoping that they score the necessary wins to avoid relegation and maintain their place in the prestigious group whose number has been reduced to ten following a JSF decision to relegate four teams while only promoting two last season.

China unveils plans for Atlanta

BEIJING (AFP) — China unveiled its plans for the Atlanta Olympic Games on Monday, saying it will try to do as well as it did in Barcelona four years ago while rejecting allegations that its athletes systematically used drugs.

"While the United States, Germany and Russia are invincible, China, one of some 10 members in the second echelon, hopes to finish atop in the group in Atlanta," said Chinese Olympic Committee (COC) Vice President Yuan Weimin at a press conference to announce China's line-up for the Olympiad.

"It's a tough challenge for the Chinese athletes since all the members in the group are strong enough to grab some 10 gold medals in Atlanta," Yuan said, declining to specify the number of medals China hoped to win.

At the 1992 Barcelona Games, China won 54 medals, including 16 golds, finishing fourth behind Germany, which picked up 34 golds.

The Chinese will figure in 22 of the 26 events. They will be absent from baseball, hockey, pentathlon and equestrian events.

China will be counting on its female athletes on the 310-strong team — the largest yet sent by China to the Olympics — to keep its flag flying high in Atlanta.

Muster threatens to pull out of Wimbledon

VIENNA (R) — World number two Thomas Muster may pull out of next week's Wimbledon after being seeded only seventh for the grass-court tournament.

Muster's coach, Ronald Leisgeb, said Tuesday that the Austrian, who has never won a grass court tournament, was very unhappy about the low seeding.

"Never in the history of Wimbledon has a world number two and former number one been seeded so low. That's a subtle way of saying that they don't want him," Leisgeb told the Austrian news agency APA.

"This is just further proof that people over there don't value Thomas. When they call him on Monday, they will soon find out

whether he is there or not." Muster, who has lost in the first round on each of his previous four visits to Wimbledon, had only one Davis Cup success on grass to his name before recording his first ATP tournament wins on the surface on his way to the semifinals at Queen's Club last week.

But that late burst of form, and his 11 clay-court titles last year, failed to convince the Wimbledon seeding committee that the Austrian should be in the top six.

Muster's first match will be against Spaniard Javier Sanchez and he is scheduled to meet former Wimbledon champion Michael Stich in the fourth round.

Atlanta planning new steps to combat heat at Olympics

ATLANTA (R) — Olympic organisers Tuesday announced additional measures they plan to take to help protect athletes and spectators from Atlanta's scorching summer heat following complaints at the U.S. Olympic athletics trials and a grand prix meeting here last month.

"We decided to go with some significant additional hydrating procedures, including misting and fans, not all of which are deployed at this time, but are definitely a part of our games-time programme and presentation," ACOG chief Billy Payne told reporters.

Temperatures in the shaded portion of Olympic stadium were announced as 89 degrees (31 C), 101 (38 C) in the sunny sections of

the grandstand, and a stifling 112 degrees (44 C) on the track itself.

Several athletes, including eight-time Olympic champion Carl Lewis, have said they have found it difficult to keep their body fluids at comfortable levels.

Payne said additional water stations and shelters from the sun will be built for fans at several Olympic venues. He said the decision was made following the grand prix meet in May, when temperatures soared past 90 degrees (32 C).

"With respect to spectators, we have taken additional significant steps — supplemental steps — over the last several weeks," he said.

"No athlete is going to be

denied an opportunity to hydrate himself immediately, simply by making the request," Payne promised. With just 31 days remaining before the opening ceremonies, the head of the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games said preparations are "on time and on schedule."

"If I had to characterize in just a few words how we feel now, it's going from nervousness and fatigue to excitement. We now feel in very real measure the excitement of the games as they approach," he said.

All permanent construction is complete and work is nearly completed on a number of temporary Olympic facilities, Payne said.

El-Zay enters Saudi market

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international brands. This move was a result of a signed agreement between EL-ZAY & Zuhairi, one of the largest Saudi trading companies. A shipment of EL-ZAY fine men's garments was sent on its way to Saudi Arabia last week. This shipment was the first of many.

Yanks spoil Radke's perfect game bid, Indians beat Red Sox

NEW YORK (R) — Minnesota's Brad Radke took a perfect game into the seventh inning, but one bad pitch cost him a victory as the Twins fell to the New York Yankees 2-0 on Tuesday.

Kenny Rogers scattered six hits over eight shutout innings for the Yankees and Tino Martinez won the game for New York with his 100th career home run.

Radke (4-8) set down the first 19 batters he faced before Paul O'Neill slapped a double down the left-field line breaking up the no-hitter. Four pitches later, Martinez homered into the right-field seats for the game's only runs.

Radke gave up just three hits and struck out three in going the distance.

In Detroit, Geronimo Berroa hit a three-run homer and Mark McGwire hit a two-run shot as the Oakland Athletics jumped out to a six-run lead and held off the Tigers 8-5.

In Seattle, Carlos Delgado hit a three-run homer in the first and Joe Carter added a two-run shot in the seventh to lead the Toronto Blue Jays to an 11-3 rout of

the Mariners. In Baltimore, Dean Palmer and Juan Gonzalez hit two-run home runs and three teammates added solo shots to back seven scoreless innings from Darren Oliver as the Texas Rangers blanked the Orioles 7-0.

In Milwaukee, Greg Vaughn homered twice and drove in four runs and Jose Valentin hit a grand slam as the Brewers pounded the Kansas City Royals 9-1.

In Cleveland, Omar Vizquel hit a grand slam and tied a career-high with six RBI and Julio Franco had a go-ahead two-run single in the fourth inning as the Indians beat the Boston Red Sox 9-7.

Boston jumped out to a 6-0 lead, but Vizquel's blast in the second off Aaron Sele (2-5) pulled Cleveland within 6-4.

At California, Don Slaught's eighth-inning RBI single snapped a tie as

the surging Angels edged the Chicago White Sox 5-4.

Giants edge Marlins

One day after winning a 1-0 pitcher's duel, the San Francisco Giants again beat the Florida Marlins Tuesday — this time in a 9-8, 15-inning slugfest with a truly bizarre finish.

The Marlins had rallied from seven runs down, sending the game into extra innings with a five-run ninth, only to lose the more than four and half hour marathon on a wild pitch — during an intentional walk. In Chicago, the Cubs split a double header with the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Roger Cedeño homered and drove in four runs and Delino DeShields added a three-run blast to lead the Dodgers to a 9-6 victory in the opener.

Cedeño, who went 4-for-

5, recorded a two-run double in the fifth to put Los Angeles up, 3-2. He added a solo homer to cap a five-run sixth and singled in the team's final run in the eighth.

In the second game, Luis Gonzalez hit a three-run home run in the first inning and rookie Brant Brown added a pair of solo homers to lead the Cubs to a 7-4 victory over L.A.

In Atlanta, Chipper Jones hit a two-run homer in the seventh inning to snap a tie and Jermaine Dye homered and drove in two runs as the Braves beat San Diego 5-3,

handing the Padres their 11th loss in 12 games.

In St. Louis, Donovan Osborne allowed two runs over seven innings and David Bell's RBI double highlighted a two-run second inning as the Cardinals

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U.S. wants Arabs not to burn bridges with Netanyahu's Israel

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The United States will urge its Arab partners attending the Cairo summit this weekend not to burn their bridges with new, hardline Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, a senior U.S. official said.

"We'd like to see a willingness by Arab countries to work on a cooperative basis with the new Israeli government and not prejudice it," State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said here Tuesday.

The U.S. administration is also careful in reserving its own judgement of the new Israeli prime minister who was sworn in Tuesday after beating Shimon Peres in elections May 29.

Mr. Burns was non-committal on Mr. Netanyahu's coalition government, saying the United States was "not going to jump to any conclusions" before it held detailed discussions with Mr. Netanyahu, who is expected to visit here next month.

Meanwhile, Mr. Burns said, the first direct contact between a top U.S. official and the new Israeli leader would take place Tuesday, when Secretary of State Warren Christopher arrives in Israel.

Mr. Christopher on Wednesday will visit Egypt, where he will be briefed on the Arab summit by President Hosni Mubarak, before moving on to Lyon, France for a summit of the Group of Seven industrial democracies.

No stop was scheduled in Damascus, according to Mr. Burns. Israeli-Syrian negotiations have been stalled over the question of the Golan Heights, occupied since 1967 by Israel.

No talks are scheduled either with Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat, although Mr. Burns said the possibility of a meeting is not ruled out.

Mr. Netanyahu, since his election, has openly snubbed the Palestinian leader.

Mr. Burns avoided giving the impression that Mr. Christopher might put any pressure on Mr. Netanyahu, describing his upcoming visit as "exploratory" adding, "this is basically tending the diplomatic garden."

The U.S. administration has made it clear it counts on Egypt and Jordan to

make a call for moderation at the Arab summit.

During his meeting in Damascus June 8 with his Egyptian and Saudi counterparts, Syrian President Hafez Al Assad, gave Mr. Netanyahu the benefit of the doubt, at least in public. But the Syrian press slammed the new Israeli leader for refusing to return all or part of the Golan Heights to Syria.

For Damascus, the return of the strategic territory Israel annexed in 1981 is the cornerstone of any peace agreement.

Mr. Netanyahu's predecessor had put the Golan Heights on the negotiating table.

"I don't think anybody delivered a fatal blow to the peace process in the last couple of days," Mr. Burns said of Israeli-Syrian dispute. However, he did convey the U.S. administration's concern with the reaction from Damascus, and its support of the so-called "land-for-peace" negotiating strategy.

Washington insists in describing Mr. Netanyahu as an open-minded leader, and has publicly bailed his call on Syria to resume negotiations without preconditions, pretending to ignore that the formula precludes an Israeli pullout from the Golan.

U.S. Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross told the Arabic weekly Al Awasat Monday that Mr. Netanyahu would find it easy to negotiate with Mr. Assad.

Mr. Ross also insisted the United States had to be the main broker of peace in the Middle East, ruling out a role for France or the European Union.

He said the existence of more than one mediator would cause friction, and that the United States had to remain the intermediary between Syria and Israel as the Jewish state did not trust any other party to carry out the task.

Assistant Secretary of State for the Middle East Robert Pelletreau recently told a group of U.S. congressmen that he understood the Israeli decision not to withdraw its troops from Hebron in the West Bank.

He said that some "artificial deadlines" set in the Middle East peace accords might be renegotiated.

Papers hint at dispute in Kuwait over ties with Arabs

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwaiti newspapers on Wednesday reported a fresh spat among top officials over the Gulf state's position towards Iraq's Arab friends, days before the Cairo Arab summit is due to bring them to one table.

"Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah left Kuwait for Morocco on Tuesday for what appears to be an open vacation after two tension-filled cabinet meetings," the Arab Times said in a report based on remarks by "highly-informed sources."

"The difference (that emerged) lately was over the coming Arab summit and the position that Kuwait should have towards the states that sided against (Kuwait during Iraq's 1990-1991 occupation)," said Al Qabas newspaper.

Sheikh Sabah on Tuesday met the Emir Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah to ask permission to travel abroad on private leave, the official Kuwait News Agency said.

Sheikh Sabah walked out of a "stormy" cabinet meeting on Sunday in outrage after a dispute with Crown Prince and Prime Minister Sheikh Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah, Al Talea opposition weekly said.

"A fundamental dispute in relation to the Cairo summit... Led to another crisis between the Kuwaiti government's two (power) poles," Talea said.

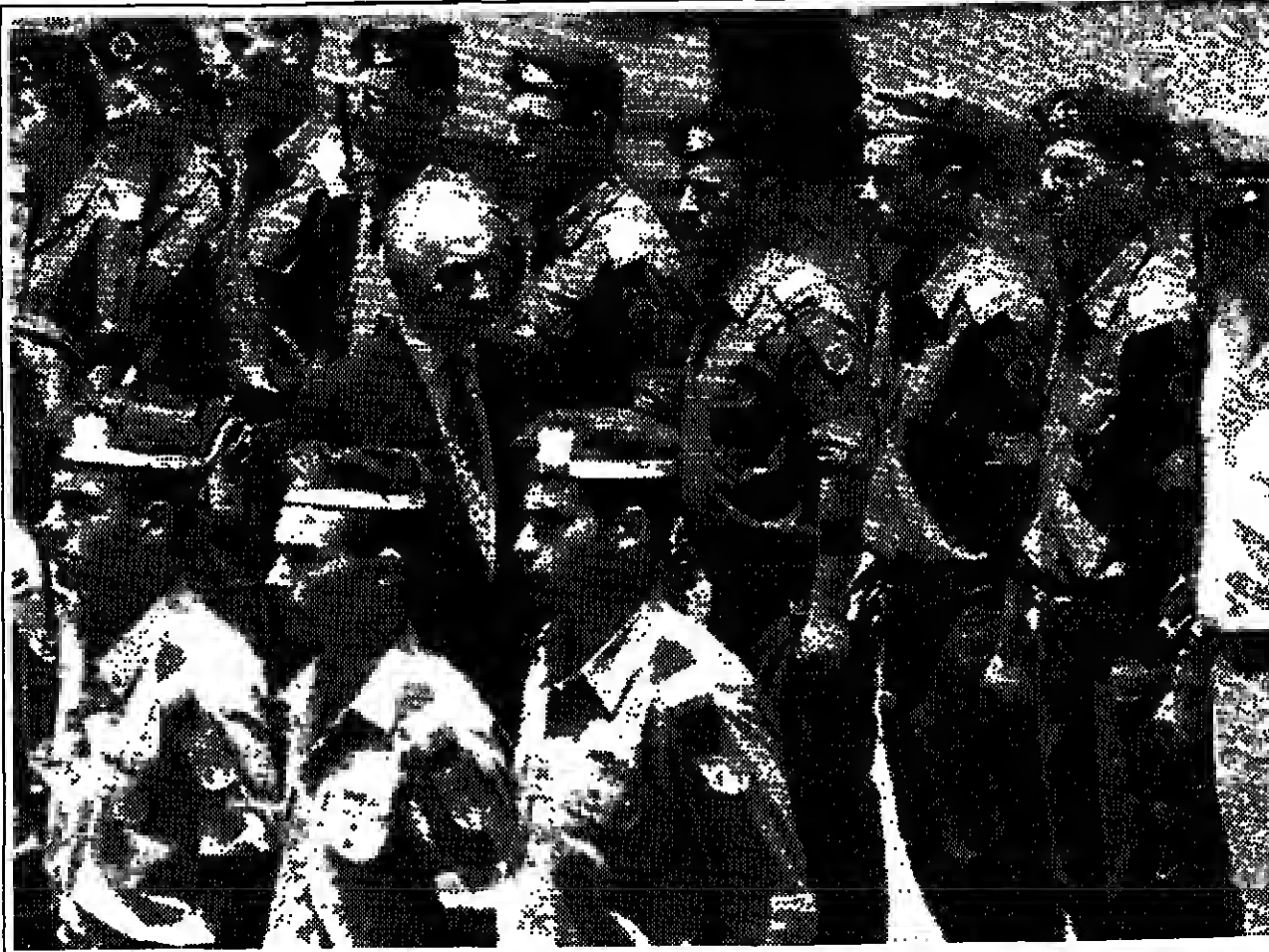
The affair seemed similar to a row last December when Sheikh Sabah announced he had offered his resignation after 30 years in the job to protest at "foreign policy differences." Hours later, he said he had agreed to carry on after talks with the Emir.

Sheikh Sabah did not say then whether the underlying dispute — his drive to resume ties with Arab states that sympathised with Iraq during the Gulf war, and Sheikh Saad's deep reservations over it — had been resolved.

Kuwait's ties with several Arab states have been strained for more than five years because of their sympathy for Baghdad during its seven-month occupation. Kuwait downgraded diplomatic relations and cut off generous official aid to some.

Many Kuwaitis are still outraged by what they call "treason" by states that for decades had been happy to receive Kuwaiti aid.

Sheikh Sabah wants to restore full ties with Jordan, Yemen and other states. Many Kuwaitis would find that hard to accept.



HANDING OVER: Shimon Peres, defeated as prime minister in the Israeli elections, reviews the troops for the last time on Wednesday, after handing over the defence ministry in Tel Aviv to new Likud party Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai. Hardline Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu was sworn in as prime minister on Tuesday night (Reuters photo)

Netanyahu meets first foreign policy challenge

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu confronts his first foreign policy challenge this weekend when Arab states hold an historic summit aimed at convincing the new hardline Israeli leader to soften his approach to the peace process.

The summit Saturday and Sunday in Cairo will bring together leaders from some 20 Arab states for the first time since before the 1991 Gulf war and prior to the launch of the Middle East peace process.

The former Labour government brought to power by Yitzhak Rabin in 1992 and run after his assassination by Shimon Peres played a role in fomenting division in the Arab ranks by reaching bilateral normalisation agreements with some states.

But even before taking office Mr. Netanyahu, head of the right-wing nationalist Likud party, succeeded in reuniting the Arab World with his "triple no" policy guidelines — no return of the Golan Heights to Syria, no independent Palestinians state and no negotiations on the future of Jerusalem.

Mr. Netanyahu has largely declined to comment on the Arab meeting, simply warning that pre-summit statements and warnings of renewed conflict from some Arab capitals "do not impress us, quite the contrary."

Some advisers to the Likud leader have sought to play down the import of the Cairo summit, with former ambassador and newly elected Likud deputy Yehuda Lancry notably pointing out that Morocco's King Hassan — a key Arab ally for Israel — was not

expected to attend.

"Netanyahu will closely follow the discussions in Cairo, keeping in mind that the show of unity cannot hide the deep rifts which still characterise inter-Arab relations," he told AFP.

"Morocco has long been an ally of Israel and it has barely concealed its opposition to the holding of this summit," he said.

But other analysts argue that the very fact the summit is being held so quickly after Mr. Netanyahu's upset victory over Peres in May 29 elections and Syria's key role in organizing the meeting, are signs of the fragility of the Labour leader's diplomatic legacy which collapsed on his defeat.

"Shimon peres succeeded in making Israel an actor within the Arab World, boosting the position of some states while isolating others, like Syria," said Meir Zamir, a foreign policy expert at Ben Gurion University.

"As a result, the Arab World as a political bloc underwent an unprecedented breakup," he said.

However, Mr. Netanyahu's categorical refusal to consider a withdrawal from the Golan Heights, seized by Israel in the 1967 war and annexed in 1981, "has given Syria a big boost in its campaign to unite Arabs around a more rejectionist position towards Israel," Mr. Zamir said.

Most analysts agree that Mr. Netanyahu, now that political negotiations on building his coalition government are behind him, will seek to ease Arab concerns over his intentions.

"We should expect a two-edged policy," said Mr. Zamir.

Arafat stresses global importance of keeping peace process alive

BEIJING (AFP) — Palestinian President Yasser Arafat responded here Wednesday to new Israeli Premier Benjamin Netanyahu's uncompromising policy address, by stressing the global importance of the Middle East peace process.

"Everybody has to remember that peace is not only a Palestinian need. It is an Israeli need, it is an European need, it is an American and an international need," said Mr. Arafat who was in China for a three-day visit.

In his policy speech to the Knesset on Tuesday, Mr. Netanyahu had pledged to pursue the peace process but said he would offer "no concessions" which could undermine Israel's security.

He also made no mention of the Oslo peace accords which granted

limited self-rule to the Palestinians.

"It is very important for everybody to remember that we are committed to the peace process not only as Palestinians but also as Arabs," Mr. Arafat told reporters, stressing that the peace accord was an international, "not bilateral" agreement.

Asked whether peace was possible with the leader of the right-wing Likud Party as prime minister, Mr. Arafat said: "It depends how he will move."

Mr. Netanyahu's narrow upset victory over Labour's Shimon Peres in national elections last month had been widely interpreted as a damaging blow to the peace process launched by Labour when it began granting limited self-rule to Palestinians

in 1993.

Mr. Arafat said he did not expect to have to enforce the Middle East peace agreement himself, but was looking for help from countries such as China, Japan and the United States as well as the rest of the international community.

"Now it is the turn of international community... not me, I hope, because I am not alone now," he told a news conference in Beijing.

"Peace is not only a Palestinian need. It is an Israeli need, it is a Middle Eastern need... It is an international need," said Mr. Arafat.

"The American letter of guarantees says... No demographic changes on the ground during negotiations. Anything against this is a clear breach of the agreement," Mr. Arafat said.

Ahmed Qourie, one of Mr. Arafat's top aides, said on Wednesday the policies of the new Likud-led ruling coalition of hawks, religious figures and former army brass amounted to a declaration of war.

"We want peace, but not peace at any price," Palestinian Assembly Speaker Qourie told Reuters.

"This will kill the process completely," he said.

"The Israeli government will negotiate with the Palestinian authority on the condition that it meets all its commitments," said Mr. Netanyahu, in an apparent signal to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to turn up the heat in a crackdown on militants opposed to the peace process.

COLUMN 8

Liz Hurley's bed to be sold

LONDON (AFP) — The king-size bed that British actress and model Liz Hurley shared with her film star boyfriend Hugh Grant in their English country house is going under the hammer next month. It is in the sale of contents of their former home, Littleton House, near Bath, south-western England, and has an estimated price of just £50 (\$75). The teak garden bench the couple sat on as the world's press captured their tense talks after Grant was arrested with a prostitute in Los Angeles in June last year is set to fetch more — between £50 and £100. Buyers will receive a certificate of authenticity with every purchase. Auctioneer Nick Gardiner-Houlgate said Tuesday: "Normally we would not sell items like modern mattresses or garden benches. But I suppose these have an intrinsic value because of their owners. The double mattress does appear to have been well used. It comes with a headboard, but does not have a baseboard," he added. The sale will be held in Bath on July 11. Littleton House itself has already been sold to an unnamed buyer for an unknown sum.

Stray orangutan grabs, kisses girl

TAIPEI (R) — An orangutan, abandoned by its owner on a street in Taiwan, grabbed a girl and kissed her repeatedly before being restrained by the police, a local newspaper reported Tuesday. The orangutan, chained to a tree in Taipei, took hold of a high school girl as she attempted to pet it, and several police officers arrived at the scene only after passersby had called for help. The United Evening News newspaper reported. The animal also bit a policeman on his left leg as he tried to free the girl, the newspaper said. The orangutan was finally tranquillised and taken to a zoo. Police said they were trying to find its owner. Orangutans are protected under Taiwan's conservation law, and private ownership must be approved by the government.

Group slams Florida zoo conditions

TAMPA, Florida (R) — A survey of Florida zoos found poor living conditions for animals, reflecting possible problems for thousands of captive creatures across the country, an animal welfare group said Tuesday. The survey found little focus on education or conservation and said a trend toward roadside zoos and animal attractions in the United States could have grave implications for the welfare of captive wildlife, said the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA), which headed the study. Only two of 21 Florida zoos visited by a British expert — Busch Gardens in Tampa and Jungle Larry's Zoological Park in Naples, would have passed inspection under the British Zoo Licensing Act, the report said. "We found very low standards of animal husbandry. We found little or no focus on education or conservation programmes," said Neil Trent, WSPA regional director. The WSPA and the Born Free Foundation said they would start a campaign to urge Americans to polio neighbourhood zoos and demand better conditions for captive animals.

Karadzic ups ante in power struggle

SARAJEVO (R) — Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic, trying to retain power despite U.N. war crimes charges, has upped the stakes in his struggle against rivals, ahead of Bosnian elections, political analysts said on Wednesday.

He has mounted an open challenge to opponents, led in the northern town of Banja Luka by Mayor Predrag Radic, who favours cooperation with the Bosnian peace agreement.

"Things are coming to a head. Mr. Karadzic can wait no longer and he will move against Mr. Radic within days," a Banja Luka source told Reuters.

Pre-empting Western moves to groom Banja Luka politicians as alternatives to the hardline group around Mr. Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb "president" last month sacked pro-peace Prime Minister Rajko Kasagic and replaced him with a hardline loyalist.

Mr. Radic, who enjoys more popularity in the region than Mr. Karadzic, resigned last week from the ruling Serbian Democratic Party (SDS) and formed his own opposition coalition for the mid-September elections.

"The SDS is going to try to sack Mr. Radic as mayor, but it will not be easy," the Banja Luka source said. "The SDS wields a majority but Mr. Mr.

Radic is very popular so it will be a litmus test of Mr. Karadzic's control of party rank and file."

The source said some 70 per cent of the Bosnian Serb voting body is in the northern area of which Banja Luka is the centre.

"He who wins the votes of the soldiers and refugees will win the elections (in the Bosnian Serb half of Bosnia)," the source said.

Mr. Karadzic controls eastern Bosnia but is considerably less popular in the north where he is blamed for the loss of western Bosnia to a Muslim-Croat offensive in 1995.

With Banja Luka itself under threat from the attack, Mr. Radic broadcast a scathing attack on Mr. Karadzic.

"People have not forgotten that, they think (Mr. Radic) saved the town. The refugees will vote for him," the source said.

This week Karadzic supporters staged a women's protest which briefly took two officials of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) hostage in Banja Luka.

Iran appears more isolated by U.S., Gulf neighbours

DUBAI (R) — Iran appears more isolated by U.S. economic pressure and unprecedented public accusations by its Arab neighbours, long suspicious of its Islamic revolution.

But analysts say the more the world tries to isolate Iran the more radical it will become.

Western diplomats say a war of words between Iran and its Gulf Arab neighbours as well as U.S. and European accusations it was sponsoring terrorism and trying to sabotage the Middle East peace process were heightening tension in the volatile region.

But they ruled out any armed confrontation in a region bristling with some of the world's most sophisticated weapons and producing around a third of the world's crude oil needs.

"We are concerned about any Iranian attempts to destabilise the Gulf and this has been a long-standing matter," one Western diplomat said.

mat said. "We know Iran is behind attempts to disrupt the peace process."

"Iran keeps saying it wants normal relations with the West. We say these are our objections. You want normal relations, then address these objections," another Western diplomat said.

Iran denied charges by the state of Bahrain that it masterminded a plot to topple the government by force, rejected charges it was a threat to the security of the region and said the only threat was the presence of U.S. forces in the Gulf.

It said it was opposed to peace talks between the Arabs and Israel but was not supporting Islamic militants in Lebanon and occupied territories to sabotage the process.

President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani said on Saturday the more pressure was exerted on Iran "the more strongly the people will defend the achievements of

the Islamic revolution."

Tehran Times daily said on Wednesday the west had always created an "evil empire" as "an all-purpose ghost" to frighten Arabs, Israelis, and the West itself. "As a cure, they sell arms to Arabs, Israelis or anyone who buys the theory that 'if you don't watch out, Iran will attack you,'" it said.

U.S. firms were banned from dealing with Iran in 1995. More sanctions are likely following congressional approval of a bill aimed at third country citizens investing in Iran and Libya.

"Iran is a power in the region and the world has to deal with it on this basis," said a Tehran-based analyst, who did not want to be named. "There is a tough mood in Iran and trying to isolate it further will only provoke renewed Islamic militancy and the idea of 'what have we gained by appeasing the west'."

He said U.S. And

European charges against Iran were part of "the historic misunderstanding since the revolution."

"They will keep resurfacing from time to time until the West understands that Iran will not give up its Islamic revolution and support to other Islamic causes," he said.

The analysts and diplomats said however new public attacks by the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) — Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates — added a fresh dimension to the Western campaign against Iran.

"The Gulf states never wanted confrontation with Iran even when warned Iran is a threat. They constantly said 'we have to live with Iran. It is our neighbour,'" one diplomat said. "But now they seem to have had enough."

The GCC states earlier this month, in the first such strong statement since

Iran's revolution in 1979, said the Islamic republic was interfering in their internal affairs and threatening the security of the region by its arms purchases.

They had always been suspicious of the revolution, but had so far resisted pressure by Washington, insisting they wanted to preserve stability and not provoke tension in a region where economic prosperity is a government priority.

Washington had lobbied hard for support of its anti-Iran policy among its Gulf allies, constantly warned them of the threat Iran posed and urged them to build up their defences.

After disputes with the UAE over three disputed Gulf islands, and constant rows with Saudi Arabia over oil policies and political rallies at the annual pilgrimage, diplomats said Iran's alleged role in the plot in Bahrain was the last straw for the GCC.